THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 4 May, 1923 Number 5

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

The Materialist Conception of History and Karl Marx

By N. LENIN

Proletarian Poetry, I.

By A. BOGDANOV

The Frankfort Conference—Documents

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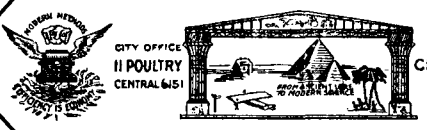

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A Magazine of International Labour

VOLUME 4 MAY, 1923 NUMBER 5

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NOTES of the MONTH

APRIL, 1921, saw the first big development in the close-knit series of events that have led directly to the present industrial situation. Month only differs from month, in the industrial history of the two years that have passed since the miners' lockout, by the extent and importance of the wage reductions forced upon the workers, and of the increases in working hours. But April, 1923, is an exception; within the last few weeks the rank-and-file workers in half-a-dozen industries or more have made it clear that they are eager to resist any further deterioration of their conditions, if given the opportunity. During the past month, in at least three industries, an actual struggle has been in progress. The farm workers in Norfolk and the jute workers of Dundee were locked out for four and five weeks respectively. The eastern counties building workers, whose struggle received little or no attention in the Press, whether Labour or capitalist, maintained an unwavering stand against the lockout of their employers, and seem, even after the builders' truce has made it impossible for them to remain out longer, to have forced their employers to offer considerably better terms than were at first proposed. These struggles, three months ago, would have seemed merely single incidents in a series; to-day their importance is not due to any objective change in the situation, but to the fact that in the trade union world as a whole there is a new spirit at work.

THE builders voted by a very large majority against acceptance of the employers' terms, and their officials' action in accepting the settlement is in direct contradiction to every expression of opinion that has come from the men. The insistence of the railwaymen has driven Mr. J. H. Thomas almost to tears; he states that his position has been made impossible because he has not been allowed to negotiate. The spontaneous and scarcely organised action of the seamen in various ports has held up ships from sailing; another wage-cut, and the seamen will not be kept quiet much longer. The pottery workers seem to have reached an agreement (the union officials state that they gave way owing to lack of funds with which to fight), and the position in the

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cotton industry is obscure; but here also there is a stir of revolt. And among the miners there have been successful local strikes against non-unionism, the aims of which are admittedly to strengthen the Federation in preparation for the new struggle that cannot be very far off. Over forty per cent. of the miners' delegates voted at the Easter conference in favour of an immediate denunciation of the present agreement.

THE attempt to secure lower wages and longer hours, which these workers are either resisting or preparing to resist, is not simply a normal product of "three years of trade depression." It is not an accidental result of some temporary fluctuation in trade. It springs from deeper causes than these, and carries a much greater weight behind it. There is scarcely an employer in Great Britain who is not fully convinced that a reduction in wages and an increase in productivity is necessary in order to restore industry to health. But there can scarcely be many employers who really believe that such changes are really sufficient to secure an immediate revival. A stone slips in the crumbling ruins of Europe, exchanges begin to rattle down once more, and here in Britain the drive against wages and hours has to be begun all over again before an "economic level" is in sight. Nevertheless, the attack cannot be checked for a moment, if only to keep industry going even at its present level. There is less talk now of a trade revival in the immediate future than there has been since the beginning of the slump. But the pressure on the workers cannot be relaxed, because capitalism, even when it abandons immediate hopes of reconstruction, needs ever greater sacrifices from the workers in order to produce at all.

CAPITAL'S need for cheaper production is so obvious to everyone concerned in industry that in this country, where more than in any other the workers are under the influence of capitalist agencies of opinion, there has been, during the past two years, a very general feeling in the trade unions that the wage-cuts demanded were inevitable. This feeling did not touch the question of longer hours, and here there have been far fewer concessions made, and less ground lost. Increases in hours have

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been bought off at the expense of wages on several occasions. But the surrender of wage-gains—payment of *Dane-geld*—only put the employers in a stronger position for the attack on hours that has developed later. The only big movement of resistance, since the miners' fight—that of the engineers—was based mainly on the right to some small measure of control of industry, a right gained during the war, and swept away by the employers in their search for efficiency in production. To-day the process has almost reached its limit. Something has got to break under the strain. The thing that seems to be cracking, if not yet broken, is the psychological dominance of capitalist needs over the minds of the rank-and-file workers. Their spirit of resistance is vague and unformed as yet. It has no definite aims. There is simply the feeling that something has got to be done, that things cannot go on as they have been doing. There is not even a definite conception yet of the attack on wages as a single process that can only be turned back by some form of united action. But with the growth in the spirit of resistance there is growing up also a hazy feeling that it is time for a reconsideration of the methods and tactics of trade unionism. There has been a sudden growth in interest in the idea of " One Big Union," and considerable pressure towards the amalgamation of the craft unions in various trades. Trades Councils in various parts of the country have been reorganised on industrial lines, and there are proposals for national conferences of the Trade Councils to organise the united action of all Labour. A campaign is on foot for a conference of all working-class organisations in the country to work out a national minimum of agreed demands and methods by which these demands can be secured. All these are signs of the new spirit at work in the rank and file.

BUT if the grip of capitalism on the minds of the rank and file seems to be breaking, under the pressure of continually worse conditions, the more obvious bonds that hold their leaders show no signs of slackening. Trade union officials are quite frankly reluctant to fight. They recognise the spirit of the members of their unions, but they are " willing to run the risk of repudiation by the men " (as a leading article in the *Daily Herald* pointed out, with approval, in regard to the officials of the Building Trades

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Federation). The phrase of pained disapproval with which Mr. J. H. Thomas greeted the cheers for a strike by a meeting of railwaymen—" no strike gets enthusiastic support from me "—has been quoted in almost every paper in the country, and ought to become a classic. In every case where a dispute is only developing the union officials are " holding back the men," and in many cases where disputes are or have been in progress the men's leaders have offered or accepted terms that their followers have definitely rejected. How far their action is dictated by their own political opinions and hopes is not easy to determine, but they certainly lack the will to win necessary in order to prevent the disastrous intervention of the leaders of the political Labour Party, whose view of industrial disputes is dictated by their fondness for middle-class votes.

IT was the intervention of one of these leaders that led the building workers to an agreement that is not very far from being a complete disaster. The position of the operatives was strong; the employers were divided, and those in the south might not have faced a lockout. The number who had actually posted lockout notices on April 7 was small as compared with the membership of the Employers' Federation. The men were defending a principle—the forty-four hour week—that they had fought for in the past and were willing to fight for again. But now this principle is submitted to the hazard of regional negotiation or " impartial arbitration," while a further reduction of wages below the level of the cost of living agreement seems almost certain. The workers are —wisely—given no chance to reject this agreement; their choice in the regional ballots is between local negotiations, in which they will not have the support of their Federation behind them, negotiation through the National Wages and Conditions Council, or arbitration by a representative of the ruling classes. This is Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's solution.

IN another and not less important dispute the same thing has occurred. Mr. MacDonald has used his good offices to end the farm workers' struggle in Norfolk. Here the solidarity of the men and their splendid temper had given real chances of success.

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Their leaders were carried with them into counter-attack; they put forward, to the amazement and disgust of the farmers, a demand for something that comes near to being a living wage—thirty shillings for a fifty-hour week. But the flush of fighting energy, in the Union officials, did not last long. Through the mediation of Mr. Harry Gosling an offer of a futile "three months' truce" was put forward. That failed; Mr. MacDonald succeeded. The terms which he induced the men to accept include a fifty-hour week, but the provision with regard to overtime make it certain that whenever the weather conditions are possible a fifty-four hour week will be worked. For the "overtime" hours up to fifty-four are to be paid for at the same rate as the ordinary working hours, and in practice will not be considered overtime at all. The men have gained two things: the guarantee of a minimum of twenty-five shillings, whatever the number of hours worked, and the shilling difference between the present terms per week and the employers' last offer. To gain these they have had to give up the extraordinarily strong position in which a month of solid resistance had placed them. Mr. MacDonald's intervention was not aimed at helping these workers in their fight for a living wage. He had other aims, and seems to have achieved them.

THESE interventions by the political leaders of Labour are not mistakes in tactics that can be passed over, or steps taken under the pressure of extraordinary necessity. The Labour Party is steadily developing a whole philosophy of mediation between employers and employed. "Mediation," writes Mr. Arthur Henderson, "in the period of industrial unrest that appears to have started, will evidently be an important part of the work of the Parliamentary representatives of the working classes." The Labour Party, in fact, only considers itself representative of the working classes when no particular issue is involved; when there is a struggle on, and middle-class opinion is touchy or definitely hostile to the workers, the Labour Party remembers its phrases about representing the interests of the whole community, and "mediates" between the workers and their opponents. The technique of class collaboration is evolving. A year ago Mr. Henderson secured the surrender of the A.E.U. with considerable

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difficulty; to-day Mr. MacDonald has settled the builders' and farm-workers' struggles with an ease that recalls the Lloyd George of pre-war days. The Labour Party has avoided the issue of the class war and deliberately excluded from its organisations those who have that issue continually in view. The result is that the Party can no longer help the workers in their industrial struggles, and its leader has come to play the part of an agent of the (capitalist) community.

T. L.

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THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY AND KARL MARX

By N. LENIN

THE realisation of the inadequacy and one-sidedness of the old materialism convinced Marx of the necessity of bringing social science into accord with the materialist foundation of society. If materialism lays down the general rule that *consciousness* is to be explained by *being*, then the application of materialism to the examination of society demands that *social consciousness* be explained by *social being*. "Technology," says Marx, "reveals the active attitude of Man towards Nature, the immediate productive process of his life, and at the same time the social relations of his life and the mental conceptions arising therefrom." Marx gives a consistent formulation of the fundamentals of materialism in its application to human society and its history in the preface to his book, "Critique of Political Economy," in the following words :—

> In the life of social production, human beings enter into definite and necessary relations which are independent of their will, and correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these productive relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis, upon which a legal and political superstructure arises, and which corresponds to definite forms of social consciousness. The methods of production of man's material existence determine the whole process of social, political, and mental life. It is not the consciousness of human beings which determines their existence; the reverse is the case; their social existence determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production, or, in juridical language, with the relations of property within which they have hitherto functioned. These relations are transformed from forms of development of the productive forces into fetters of production.
>
> Then comes the period of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation, the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations the

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> distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, æsthetic, or philosophic—in short, ideological—forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out.
>
> Just as little as one can judge an individual by what he thinks himself to be can such a revolutionary epoch be judged by its consciousness; it must necessarily be explained from the contradictions of material life, from the existing conflicts between social productive forces and relations of production. No social order ever disappears before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have been developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society. Therefore mankind always takes up only such problems as it can solve; since, looking at the matter more closely, we will always find that the problem arises only when the material conditions necessary for its solution already exist or are at least in the process of formation. Broadly conceived, Asiatic, antique, feudal, and modern bourgeois methods of production may be designated as progressive epochs of the economic social development. The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production.

The materialist conception of history, or, strictly speaking, the application of materialism to the sphere of social phenomena, has removed two of the main defects of the theory of history as hitherto understood. History has, at best, up to now, considered the ideal motives of the historical activity of human beings, without examining into the cause of these motives, without discovering the objective law behind the development of the system of social relations, without seeking for the root of these relations in the degree of development of material production. Secondly, the theories applied up to now have overlooked precisely the activity of the great masses of the population, while historical materialism has for the first time made it possible for us to examine, with the precision of natural science, the social conditions influencing the life of the masses, and the changes taking place in these conditions. Pre-Marxian "sociology" and history writing achieved at best an accumulation of bare facts, and have provided us with nothing more than a representation of some separate phases of the historical process. Marx showed the way to a comprehensive and thorough examination into the process of origination, evolution, and decay of social-economic formations, in that he regarded all contradictory tendencies

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in their totality, and traced them back to accurately definable conditions of life and production in the various classes of society ; he thus eliminated subjectivism, as well as arbitrariness in the choice and interpretation of some " leading ideas," and laid bare the roots of all ideas, without exception, and of all the different tendencies in the state of social productive forces. Human beings make their own history, but Marx was the first to show what determines the motives of human beings, and particularly of the masses of human beings ; he was the first to show what the totality of all these conflicts is to human society, what are the objective conditions of the production of material life, forming the basis for every historical activity among human beings, and what is the evolutionary law of these conditions. In this way Marx pointed out the way to the scientific study of history as a consistent process, following definite laws through all its multifarious immensity and in all its contradictions.

That in every society the strivings of some members of this society are opposed to the strivings of others, that social life is full of contradictions, that history shows us a struggle between and within peoples and societies, that history is composed of alternating periods of peace and war, revolution and reaction, standstill and rapid advance or decay—all these facts are well known. Marx gave us the clue which enables us to discover the law underlying this apparent labyrinth and chaos. This clue is the theory of class war. It is only the study of the sum total of the strivings of all the members of a society, or of a group of societies, that can lead to a scientific determination of the results of these strivings. The source of conflicting interests lies, however, in the difference of position and living conditions of the classes into which every society is divided. " The history of all societies up to now has been the history of class war," wrote Marx in 1848 in the Communist Manifesto (and Engels added later : " except the history of primeval society"). Free men and slaves, patricians and plebeians, barons and serfs, guild citizens and journeymen, in short, oppressors and oppressed have always stood in opposition to one another, have carried on an uninterrupted struggle, at times open, at times concealed ; a fight which invariably ended with a revolutionary reformation of the whole society, or with the common decay of both fighting

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classes. In earlier epochs of history we find almost everywhere a complete stratification of society into various classes, a multitudinous graduation of social positions. In ancient Rome we see patricians, plebeians, knights, slaves ; in the middle ages—feudal lords, vassals, guild citizens, journeymen, serfs ; and within almost all of these classes a still further special graduation. The modern bourgeois society which has arisen out of the decay of feudal society has not annulled class antagonisms. It has only replaced the old classes by new ones, created new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle. Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, however, is distinguished by having simplified class antagonisms. The whole of society splits up more and more into two large hostile camps, into two large classes directly antagonistic to one another : bourgeoisie and proletariat . . .

Since the great French revolution, European history has revealed in a number of countries, with special clearness, the real fundamental of events, the *Class War*. Even during the epoch of restoration there were a number of French historians (Thierry, Guizot, Mignet, Thiers) who could not but designate—when forming a generalisation on events—*Class War* as the key to French history as a whole. And the latest epoch, the epoch of complete victory of the bourgeoisie, of the parliaments, of extended if not general suffrage, of cheap daily newspapers read by the masses, the epoch of mighty and ever growing labour organisations and employers' unions, &c., has shown even more graphically, though often in a very peaceful constitutional form, class war as the motive force underlying events. In a number of historical works, Marx has in fact given us brilliant and profound examples of materialist historical writing, analysing the position of each separate class, and thus demonstrating why and how every struggle of class against class is a political struggle.

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THE GERMAN ARBEITS-GEMEINSCHAFTEN

By PAUL HOYER

(*Reprinted with acknowledgments to the* Labor Herald *of Chicago, U.S.A.*)

AT the triennial congress of the General Federation of Free Trade Unions of Germany last July in Leipzig, one of the most hotly debated subjects was that of whether or not the Federation should participate further in supplying delegates to the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* (Joint Industrial Councils) that were set up in 1918, or whether they should abandon the policy and leave the field open to the " Christian " trade unions, the *Hirsch-Dunker Gewerkvereine*, and other non-socialist federations of workers to fill their vacancies. So close was the vote that those who stand for continuing the policy of collaboration with the bosses can take little comfort from the result, even though they won a technical victory. For the number of delegates voting against the proposal of continuing was larger than the number voting in favour—the vote stood 345 for abandoning the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* and 327 for retaining them—and only the fact that the 327 delegates represented 3,803,186 members while the 345 represented but 3,582,362 saved the day for the reactionaries by a narrow margin.

What, then, are these Joint Industrial Councils about which opponents and friends are so stirred up ?

During the great world war, under the slogan of preserving the unity of the empire, the unions and the bosses had agreed to refrain from measuring their strength in strikes and lockouts, and to try to compose their differences over the green table. Then, in 1918, came the revolution with its tremendous upheavals. For a while it looked as though Germany might go the way of Russia and become a Workers' State. The bosses saw two alternatives—one, of losing all they had and seeing their industries nationalised; the other, of continuing the " industrial peace " policy of war time, and of admitting the workers to equal partnership, on the surface at least, in the management of industry. They chose the latter—and the workers fell for the bait.

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Thus on November 15, 1918, an agreement was arrived at between the leading associations of employers on the one hand, and the general commission of the Free Trade Unions of Germany, the Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the Federation of German Workers' Associations (also known as the *Hirsch-Dunkers*, after their founders), the Polish Unions, and the Joint Councils of shopkeepers' assistants, of non-manual workers' federations, and of technical employees, on the other. This agreement provided for certain reforms, and the establishment of a central committee with equal representation of employers and employees to settle all disputes.

Further negotiations ensued, and by December, 1919, a definite constitution had been adopted for the "Central Joint Council of the Industrial Employers and Employees of Germany," the preamble of which reads as follows:—

> Imbued with the realisation and the responsibility, that the reconstruction of our national economy demands the co-operation of all economic and mental forces and an all-embracing, harmonious working union, the organisations of industrial employers and employees associate themselves in a central joint industrial council.

It will be seen from the very wording of the preamble that an harmonious living together of the lion and the lamb is the object sought.

Space will not permit the reproduction of all the provisions of the constitution. Suffice it for me to construct a picture from it as to how the joint industrial councils are made up, what classes of workers and of industrials they embrace, and what the tasks are that are delegated to them under the rules adopted.

German industry is, for the purpose of the councils, subdivided into fourteen branches; iron and metal, food and drink, building, textile, mining, glass and pottery, wood, clothing, paper, leather, chemical, oils and fats, and stone industries, as well as the electrical, gas, and water works. Each of these forms a national joint industrial council for its particular branch. Each council is made up of an equal number of representatives of the employers and of the employees. The basis of representation is the following: for the first 150,000 workers employed in the industry, one representative each of the employers and employees constitutes

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the joint council; for 150,000 to 250,000, two each; for 250,000 to 350,000, three each, and so on. The national councils may be subdivided geographically or as subdivisions of the same industry.

Each national joint industrial council has jurisdiction over questions pertaining exclusively to that industry, each regional council over those affecting that geographical district, and so on. Each national joint council determines independently the size of its executive committee and its general committee, and regulates its own order of business. The tasks of these bodies are described in the constitution as "the autonomous regulation of questions pertaining to the particular industry or trade."

Out of these national councils and their regional or trade subdivisions is created the Central Joint Industrial Council, the *Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft* for all Germany. Its purpose is that of "solving by common effort all economic and socio-political questions affecting German industry and trade, as well as all matters of legislation and administration pertaining to same." It has two national organs—a Central Executive Committee (*Zentralvorstand*) and a Central General Committee, or Board of Directors (*Zentralausschuss*).

The Central Executive Committee is composed of twenty-three representatives each of employers and employees, each of the fourteen branches of industry having the right to at least one from both sides. The election of the twenty-three workers' representatives is one of the chief bones of contention in the present fight in the Free Trade Unions. The Central Board of Directors varies in size, but it has one fixed quantity in the provision that it shall have, besides delegates from the joint national councils, "nine representatives to be designated by the central federations of employers and employees." The functions of this Central Board of Directors are defined as follows:—

> The tasks of the Central Board of Directors consist in the discussion and regulation of all questions that are common to all national joint industrial councils, in other words, to the entire industry and the entire trade of Germany, as well as such questions as go beyond the jurisdiction of the individual national councils. The Central Board of Directors is the final authority on questions at issue between the various national joint industrial councils.

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Unless there are provisions to the contrary in the collective agreements between employers and employees, the national joint industrial councils have the right and duty of interpreting collective agreements and of mediating in the event of differences between the bosses and the workers.

Such, then, is the general structure of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* system. What next are the questions which it undertakes to solve?

The report for 1922 is not yet complete, so that my more recent data are not from official reports, but were supplied by the labour secretary of the *Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft* in Berlin. For the years 1919 and 1920, however, a detailed printed report is available, from which can be seen the wide range of subjects touched upon.

One of the first tasks was that of clarifying the relations of this voluntary association to the National Economic Council, and the Ministry of Labour, bodies created by the new German constitution.

Conferences brought about the official recognition of the joint industrial councils, which were given consultative and nominative powers. Relations having been established with the Government, the councils got to work. I will not deal with the various national sub-councils, but rather review the work of the *Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft*, for all questions of national importance came before that body. Chronologically, the following are some of the things with which the Central Joint Council dealt :—

Protested against separation of Saar Valley from Germany, and against provisions of Versailles Treaty; obtained representation of the joint council in delegation to Versailles; worked out plan for restoration of devastated areas in France and Belgium, which was frustrated by France's refusal; sought to stimulate production of coal by placing miners in a specially preferred category, the proposal failing of adoption; issued an appeal for greater production in name of patriotism, and opposed shortening of work day; protested against chaotic conditions prevailing in the railway system; brought about reorganisation of the National Economic Council; proposed an extra duty on exports to improve social insurance, which collapse of the mark and Governmental delay brought to nothing—Government agreed to this extra tax, but put it in the general treasury ; and co-operated in the establishment of national employment bureaux.

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The above topics, taken from the official report for 1919 and 1920, indicate the problems with which the Central Industrial Council concerned itself in that time. According to the Labour secretary of the council, more recent activities include:—

On the question of the eight-hour day, the council agreed that "in principle" the eight-hour day must be adhered to, but that under certain conditions overtime work must be permitted, in view of the economic plight of Germany; "stimulation of production," insisted upon by the bosses, brought about by winning over unions to agreements with the bosses for overtime work; prevailed upon railroad workers to accept compromise on pay for time when held in readiness for service, at 50 per cent. to 70 per cent. of regular wage; sought to prevent strikes by securing automatic rise in wages as index figures for cost of living rose.

Having traced the origin and composition of the joint industrial councils, and having shown with what kind of questions they concern themselves, I shall now try to give as objectively as possible the two points of view prevailing in the organised Labour Movement as to the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme to the workers themselves.

Those who favour the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* advance several arguments in substance as follows: That in comparison with the times when trade union leaders were jailed for trying to organise, the granting of formal equality in the joint councils is a big step forward; that the joint councils are a training school for the workers in learning the management of industry; that the joint councils afford favourable conditions for carrying on the class struggle on the basis of equality with the employer; and finally, that the scheme is, after all, nothing more than an extension of collective bargaining.

This point of view is held by the official leaders of the trade unions, and was urged strongly before the Tenth Congress of the General Federation of Free Trade Unions of Germany at Nuremberg in 1919, when already grave objections to the scheme were voiced. It was put forward with even greater emphasis before the Eleventh Congress at Leipsig in July, 1922.

The attack against the joint councils was led chiefly by the Communists, but was also supported by those Socialists who until

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recently constituted the Independent Socialist Party, and even by a number of Majority Socialists, and rested upon arguments somewhat as follows:—

The fundamental idea underlying the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* is that of industrial peace. This, says the militants, is something we do not want, for there cannot be peace until the workers have been victorious. Victory cannot come through joint councils of workers and bosses, but only through wiping out the boss-worker relationship—through the abolition of capitalism. To go into the joint councils is to prop up the capitalist system.

Secondly, experience has shown that almost every worker delegate to a joint council loses his Labour viewpoint. He soon sees matters through the eyes of the employer. He becomes filled with pride at the thought of being on an equal footing with the boss and suddenly thinks the employer not such a bad fellow after all. Also, the employers, having great financial resources, can send as their delegates men who are skilled in making argument most attractive and innocent looking, and who "put one over" on the workers without their being aware of it until it is too late.

Thirdly, say the militants, the joint councils do not at all place the workers on equality with the bosses. Part of the "equal" representation of the workers is made up of delegates, like those from the "Christians" and *Hirsch-Dunkers*, that are so many tools of the bosses, and ready in decisive moments to betray the interests of the workers.

As for the argument that the joint councils are a training ground for management of industry, this is stoutly denied by the militants. The bosses use one set of data and figures in these councils and another set in their own employers' and manufacturers' associations. And finally, the militants challenge the defenders of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* to name a single advantage thus far gained that could not better have been secured by the workers in their own organisation, dealing with the employers, not as joint councils for industrial peace, but as exponents of the class struggle.

Such is the line up on this great issue in Germany to-day. The movement against the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* is growing stronger. One national union—the shoe workers'—has withdrawn from the joint councils. How fast the others will follow suit depends upon

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the degree of strength the militants can muster. Certain it is that the Communist members of the General Federation of Free Trade Unions stand unalterably opposed to the idea, and that the great majority of the former Independent Socialists favours cutting loose from the semi-fraternal relationship with the bosses. To the extent that the German workers regain their spirit, and recover from the general weariness now prevalent, the struggle against the *Arbeitsgemeinschaften* will once more sweep the great German Labour Movement into the active class struggle. With growing turmoil in the industrial and political life of the German nation these joint councils and the question of collaboration within them are becoming the storm centres of the Labour Movement.

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PROLETARIAN POETRY—I

By A. BOGDANOV

PROLETARIAN poetry is, first of all, *poetry*, a definite form of art.

There is no poetry, just as in general there is no art, where there are no living images. If we put the multiplication table or the laws of physics into verse—no matter how smooth and finished the verse may be—this will not be poetry, for abstract ideas are not living images.

There is also no poetry, just as in general there is no art, where there is no harmony in the combination of images, where there is no conformity and connection between them, no "arrangement" one might say . . . . If, for instance, the figures in a painting are not connected by uniformity of plan, or if they are arranged in a casual, disorderly manner, there is no picture, and the result has nothing to do with the art of painting.

It is necessary to know and remember this maxim : art is the arrangement of living images ; poetry is the arrangement of living images in verbal form.

Poetry began where human speech itself began. The spontaneous cries which accompanied the efforts of primitive men were the embryos of words, the first indications ; they were natural and intelligible indications of those actions during which they sprang up. And these labour cries became also the origin of the labour song. Song was not simply a matter of amusement or distraction. When labour was being done in common it served to unite the efforts of the workers, giving them a certain harmony, a rhythmic regularity and coherence. Consequently, song was a means for the organisation of collective effort.[1] This same significance is preserved by it at the present day.

In the war song, which developed later, this same organisational significance is manifested in a somewhat different way. It was

[1] c.f. Hauling songs and chants—*Translator.*

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usually sung before battle, and it creates a uniform mood, unity of the collective spirit, the first condition for concerted action in battle. It is, so to speak, the preliminary organisation of the forces of a collectivity for the difficult task before it.

The second root of poetry is the myth. The myth is also the beginning of knowledge in general.

Originally words indicated human actions. But only by means of these same words could men communicate with each other about the phenomena of external nature and of its elemental forces. Thus it happened that, in every tale or description, even the most crude, nature inevitably became personified. No matter what was spoken of, animals or trees, the sun or moon, a river or the sea, the impression was always conveyed that some man was being talked about—the sun " walks " over the sky, in the morning he " rises," in the evening he " goes to sleep," in winter he " sickens, becomes weak," in spring he " gets well again," &c. This involuntary transference of ideas from the human to the elemental is called the " primary metaphor." Without it, thinking of the surrounding non-human world would be impossible, and consequently knowledge could not be created.

Later on, thought little by little assimilated the distinction existing between itself and external surroundings, but it did not completely emancipate itself from the primary metaphor. The word " *mir* " (the Russian for " world ") is one of its vestiges, for it means a community, a collectivity of men, and in some provinces *mir* means simply " the village " or the village community. And in poetry the primary metaphor has always retained its great rôle : the personification of nature is still the most important method of poetry.

Originally there was no element of fiction in the myth. When a father related to his children all that he knew from experience about the changing fortunes of the sun during its annual cycle, this crude lecture on astronomy invariably took the form of a tale about the adventures of a man, powerful and good, carrying on a struggle against hostile forces which sometimes had to retreat before him, and sometimes overpowered and defeated him, &c. In the course of time poetical myths developed out of this tale, such as the Babylonian epic of the hero Gilgamesh, or that of Hercules amongst

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the Greeks. If a man wished to inform his less experienced friend that the corpses of the dead are harmful to the living, that they cause sickness or even death, he could do so only in the form of a tale about the wickedness of the dead, about their enmity to the living. In time this gave rise to the myth about ghouls. At that time this was the only possible form of imparting knowledge to others in society.

Poetry, prose, science, all these were inseparably fused in that indefinite embryo, the primitive myth. But the vital sense of the myth, its significance for society, was quite definite : it also was an instrument for the organisation of the social toiling life of men. Why is the knowledge of man about himself, about life and nature, gathered and handed down from generation to generation ? In order to harmonise the practical efforts of men, to direct them according to this knowledge, to arrange them—in a word, *to organise them upon the basis of this knowledge.*

The original sun-myth—a description of the seasons of the year —gave directions as to the cycles of agricultural work, and the times for hunting and fishing ; and these directions were necessary for men whose social organisation was based upon the systematic division of their labour according to the seasons. The myth about the dead furnished directions for the hygienic measures that must be taken with regard to corpses ; they must be buried deep enough, at a considerable distance from dwelling places, &c. In those times primitive poetic knowledge played the same organising rôle as modern exact science plays in modern production.

Has the vital significance of poetry changed in its essence since then ?

Let us recall what the epics of Homer and Hesiod were to ancient Greece : they were an important educational means. Now, what is education ? It is the fundamental organisational work which introduces new members into society. Human raw material is developed and prepared so as to become useful living links in the system of social connections, each occupying his own place and accomplishing his own part in the general social process. Education organises the human collectivity just as drilling, discipline, and instruction in the technique of war organises an army.

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Those of our art theorists who, following the aristocratic or partly bourgeois traditions, consider art as an " adornment of life," a kind of luxury, do not understand to what extent they contradict themselves when they admit at the same time that art has an educational, *i.e.*, just a practical and organisational significance.

There are two bourgeois theories : the theory of " pure art " and that of " social art." The first maintains that art *must* be an end in itself, *must* be free from the interests and strivings of the practical struggles of humanity. The second maintains that art *must* carry out in life the progressive tendencies of these struggles. We may discard both theories once we discover what art actually *is* in the life of the world. Art organises the forces of life quite independently of whether it has any social aims or not. There is no need to attach any aims to art—they are only an unnecessary and harmful constraint on it. The artist can give the most harmonious arrangement to his living images when he does so freely, without compulsion or direction. But it would also be absurd to prohibit art from taking from its subject political and social themes. The material for art is the whole of life, without any limitation or restraint.

Lyrical poetry, the art of individual moods and emotions, is the " purest " type of poetry. What or whom can this type of poetry organise socially ?

If lyric poetry expressed personal emotions only felt by the artist, and nothing else, it would not be comprehensible or interesting to anyone beside himself—it would not be art. The significance of this poetry lies in the fact that it reveals a certain type of mood, which may be characteristic of various persons. It expresses an association of emotions felt also by a great variety of people. The poet reveals and elucidates to men the moods they have in common, and so he unites and welds them together unobserved, by the unity of mutual understanding in the sphere of sentiment, by the " sympathy " that he awakens in all of them. At the same time the poet educates this aspect of their souls in one direction, and thus deepens and broadens their congeniality, the durability of their group, class, or association. This makes for and develops the possibility of combined and co-ordinated action ; here also then, just as in the case of the war song, we have to deal with a

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certain preliminary organisation of the forces of a group for the different expressions of their common life and struggle.

The poetry which represents and describes life, as the epic, drama, and the novel, has an organisational significance similar to that science, and serves to direct, on the basis of past experience, the arrangement of mutual relations between men. Thus, epic poems give living images of mass actions, of the connection in such acts between the "heroes," or leaders, and the "crowd" that follows them. They represent the struggle and reconciliation of the collective forces of the people. Most novels in their romantic aspect represent the solution, on the basis of concrete examples, of one type of problem : how individual men and women come together under different conditions to create elementary organisations in the form of families ; and then how different individuals adapt themselves to those who are around them, to their social surroundings. Drama represents in action organisational conflicts and their solutions, &c. In our times poetry and fiction in general, for the city population at least, is probably the most popular and important means of education, *i.e.*, of introducing the individual into the established system of social relations.

Modern society is divided into classes. These are collectivities separated by many vital differences ; therefore they organise separately, along dissimilar lines, one against the other. Naturally their instruments of organisation (*i.e.*, their ideologies) are different, disparate, not only out of harmony with each other, but simply excluding each other. The same is true with regard to poetry ; in a class society, poetry also is representative of the different classes : of the landlord class, the peasantry, bourgeoisie, or proletariat.

Of course, this should not be understood in the sense that poetry defends the interests of one class or another : sometimes this is the case, especially in political and social poetry, but comparatively seldom. The class character of poetry lies much deeper. It is rooted in the fact that the poet sees life from the viewpoint of a certain class ; he sees the world with the eyes of that class ; he thinks and feels in the way peculiar to his class because of its social nature. Behind the individual author is hidden the collective author, his class ; and poetry is part of its self-consciousness.

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The individual author may not even think of it, not even suspect it. In the works themselves there is sometimes no direct indication of their class source, no mention of it at all. Take for instance the lyrical poetry of Fet. This beautiful poetry, in which the expressions of the life of nature are gracefully intermingled with the finest emotions of the poet himself, seems, at first glance, to be an example of "pure art," apart from every class element. And yet, even before Marxism was known in Russia, there were men who saw that it was "aristocratic" poetry. "Aristocratic," that means typical of the landed nobility; it originated in the moods, in the surroundings and the forms of life and thought, of a certain caste, a class in Russian society. And such is actually the truth of the matter.

That deep and absolute aloofness from all material, economic, prosaic cares, which is so characteristic of Fet's lyrics, was only possible for the truly aristocratic nobility of the countryside which had become more and more divorced from production and its struggles. Even the bourgeoisie, which was then developing and was concerned with profits and competition, could not cultivate those sort of subtle emotions and sentiments; and besides, being for the most part an urban class, it was not able to see and understand nature as sensitively as the gentry and the lords of the manor. It is quite easy to see that this poetry must have, indeed, served as an organising force for the landlord caste. This caste was already in a state of decadence, but, of course, it did not want to leave the historical stage, and was still vigorously defending its interests. Fet's poetry not only united the representatives of the landlord caste in a certain community and identity of mood, but at the same time it put them indirectly in opposition to the rest of society, and so strengthened their feeling of unity. It strengthened their consciousness of their spiritual superiority over all other classes of society, and consequently their consciousness of their right to a privileged position. It was as though this poetry said to them: "See, what æsthetic and sublime beings we are, how tender and subtle *our* souls are, how noble *our* culture is." And hence followed naturally the desire to defend this culture firmly and unitedly, so to defend the fundamental basis of this culture: material wealth and a ruling position.

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In a society of classes there is *no room for non-class poetry*. But this is not to say that in every given instance poetry belongs to one particular class. Thus, in the poetry of Nekrassov there is a fervent defence of the exploited peasantry, and a deep and sympathetic understanding of its life, together with a vivid expression of the strivings, ideas, and sentiments of the urban "intelligentzia," a class then just developing, but restrained by the old *régime*. Nekrassov belonged to this class by his occupation. At the same time there are in his poetry remnants of the psychology of the landed gentry to which he belonged by birth. This is inter-class poetry. Such, for the most part, is also the democratic poetry of our own days : the elements of the peasant class, of the working class, and of the " intelligentzia " are here intermingled. This can also be easily seen in many of our modern poets, who rose from among the people.

The character of proletarian poetry is defined by the primary and vital conditions of the working class itself : by its position in production, by the type of its organisation, by its historical destiny.

The proletariat is a *toiling*, *exploited*, *struggling*, *developing class*. It is a class which is concentrated in masses in the cities, and the fellowship of co-operation is its characteristic. All these traits tend equally to *distinguish* proletarian poetry, and make it different from any other poetry.

Toil, exploitation at the hands of the ruling classes, the struggle against exploitation, the striving towards progress—do all these traits distinguish the proletariat from the poorer peasantry, from the lower strata of the toiling " intellectuals " ? Obviously not ; they are inherent in these groups too ; they bring them nearer to the working class. These groups have had earlier opportunity than the proletariat to create their poetry ; and in its first steps on the path of poetic creation the proletariat naturally joins with them. Its attempts are here still of an undefined class character : it is revolutionary-democratic poetry. Let us take, for an example, the beautiful song written by a young worker, Alex. Gmiriev, who died in the penitentiary under the *régime* of autocracy.

SCARLET

We are come to meet the sunrise. We are come,
And to freedom do we sing our scarlet song.

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Hear the scarlet sounds resound above the earth;
They awaken, horrifying all, like songs of war.

As a summons to the proud of heart and soul,
Mightily our song resounds across the world.

We are come to meet the sunrise. We are come,
With the scarlet flag of freedom we march on.

See our banner with the Sun-blood for its hue,
See it burning, conquering eternal gloom.

Crèpe for the fallen is our standard's staff of black. . . . .

We are come with scarlet banner, we are come
With a song of scarlet, on the scarlet road of Sun.

Long, incessant as the ages, is our way,
But it is the purest and most scarlet way.

We are few, we're small in numbers—have no fear—
Millions more are come to join us, and to bear

All our burdens, and our banner—freedom, blood!
We are madmen, but immortal as our love.

Let us then not tarry to mourn above the tombs,
Onward, onward, all who love the sun!

We are come to meet the sunrise, we are come,
And with song and scarlet banner we march on.

There is nothing about this song, except the personality of the author, to make it really proletarian. It could inspire workers to revolutionary impulse, or equally well inspire the former champions of the progressive intellectuals—the *narodovoltzi* (fighters for popular freedom)—or the peasant fighters for land and liberty. And the bulk of the old revolutionary poetry is of the same sort, whether it originates from among the intellectuals, the peasants, or the workers.

What essentially separates the proletariat from all the other democratic elements is the distinctive type of its labour and the way in which it works together.

The deepest breach in the nature of human toil was made when the " brains " became separated from the " working hands," when " managing " became separated from " execution," when one man started to think and solve problems for the others, and directed

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them, while the others had to do what he ordered them, and do it in the way he ordered. This was the separation of the " organiser " from the " executor," it was the beginning of authority and subordination. One man became a superior being in relation to the others, and this gave rise to the feeling of admiration. On the basis of this feeling the religious view of life began to develop. Previously there was no such view of life, and there was even no room for it, for elemental nature with its sullen forces causes in man only animal fear, not the " fear of God." Man was in awe of these powerful hostile forces, but he had no idea of superior beings, or of meekness and admiration, the indispensable elements of religion. Authoritative co-operation, growing and deepening, saturated the whole consciousness of men with the spirit of authority : nature became subjected to ruling organisers—divinities ; each body received its ruling organiser—the soul.

By the very character of his work the organiser is a higher type, the executor a lower. The one has initiative, observation, control, for which he must use experience, knowledge, and exerted attention ; the other knows only mechanical execution, for which he has no need for all these qualities, but only for passive discipline, blind obedience. The slave, the serf, or the soldier in the army of an ancient despot does not need to take thought while doing his work ; on the contrary, thought might even prove harmful. He is only a living tool, no more.

The second breach in the nature of human labour is specialisation. Every specialist has his own task, his own experience, his distinct little world. The tiller of the land knows his field, plough, and horse ; the blacksmith knows his forge, bellows, hammers ; the shoemaker his leathers, awls, and blocks. No one wants or can afford to know anybody else's profession, because everybody is anxious to concentrate on his own business and master it to perfection. The breach is still more deepened by the separation and independence of the specialised enterprises, which meet only on the market, whither they come to exchange their goods. There, their mutual connection is completely hidden behind the struggle of all against all : the sellers against the buyers for prices, the sellers between themselves for sales, the buyers between themselves for the goods, if there is a scarcity of them.

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This second breach in the nature of human labour gives rise to individualism. Man becomes accustomed in his thoughts and feelings to separating himself from all other men ; he looks upon himself as existing quite apart from all others, with distinct interests, independent of his social surroundings in his strivings and actions, an independent creative being. For him his own individuality, his personal " ego," is the centre of his view of life and of his sense of the world ; the freedom of his " ego " in his highest ideal.

Both these changes in the nature of labour run through all the consciousness of the old classes ; consequently they manifest themselves also in their poetry. The poetry of the purely authoritative epoch and of the epoch of feudalism is penetrated with the spirit of authority ; the myths and epics, such at the Book of Genesis with the Hebrews, the Iliad and Odyssey with the Greeks, the Mahabharata of the Hindus, the " Billinas " and the " Lay of Igor's Regiment " of the Russians, limit the whole course of life, all the chain of its events, to the activity of deities, heroes, kings, and leaders ; the lyric of this period—the best example of it are the Psalms of David—perceives nature as a revelation of the will of God, and is saturated with a spirit of prayer and submission. In the poetry of the bourgeois world individualism reigns supreme : there the centre is the individual, with his fortunes and experiences. The poem, novel, drama, describe the conflicts of the individual with the rest of the world, his relations to other people and to nature, his struggle for happiness or for his career, his creative activity, his victories and defeats ; lyric poetry is also limited to individual psychology, to the emotions and moods of the individual : his perception of nature, his joys, sorrows, dreams, disappointments, sexual love with its sufferings and exaltations . . . .

(*To be continued*)

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EGYPTIAN NATIONALISM AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

By G. A. HUTT

FOR British imperialism Egypt means primarily three things. First, it means a source of raw cotton and a market for cotton piece goods. Second, it means a highly profitable field for investment and financial operations of all kinds. Third, it means the Suez Canal. Ever since Mohammed Ali introduced the culture of fine cotton into Egypt four years after the battle of Waterloo, British commercial interests have driven an extremely lucrative trade at Alexandria in this important raw material : about the middle of the century the Egyptian Government began to be wrapped more and more firmly in the toils of European financiers—English, French, and Greek : finally, with the development of imperialism, it became increasingly evident that British imperialism was intent on securing the monopoly in exploitation of Egypt. It is true that for many years critical relations subsisted between British and French imperialism in Egypt, and this period of crisis was not finally liquidated till the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, by which France found her *quid pro quo* in Morocco. In fact, however, the ultimate dominance of British imperialism in Egypt had been secured by Disraeli's notorious *coup* of the purchase of the Suez Canal shares in 1875. This acute stroke of imperialist policy arose very simply out of the needs of the political situation : for a glance at the map will show that, with sea communication between the Mediterranean and Red Seas, Egypt is the key position of the British Empire. It is unthinkable that British imperialism should lose control of Egypt and yet maintain its grip on India. And the imperialists of Britain realise this with perfect clearness. Egypt has been variously described as the " coping stone " or the " occipital nerve " of the British Empire ; and either metaphor will serve. Further, Egypt is the centre from which British imperialism can dominate the Sudan, the Hedjaz and Arabia, Palestine, Mesopotamia—and from which, too, it can exercise an effective surveillance

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over the operations of French and Italian imperialism in northern and eastern Africa, to say nothing of the French Syrian mandate. But in Egypt itself the solidarity of the different imperialisms is complete. They group themselves naturally round British imperialism, as the one with the strongest hold, and nothing illustrated this more vividly than the way in which, on the outbreak of the 1919 mass revolts, the foreign commercial communities in Egypt unanimously took their stand behind Britain in the struggle with the rising. Those sections of Egyptian nationalism who still nourish hopes of a return to the dual control, whereby they may be enabled to play off Britain against France to the advantage of the nationalist cause, are indeed embracing a chimera. The struggle against British imperialism is for Egypt the struggle against all imperialism.

It should be noted that Egypt has achieved a more advanced stage of capitalist development than any other country in the Near East : the differentiation of classes on the basis of the class struggle is appearing in a very marked way. Of course, feudal relations still subsist, and anyhow the Nile Valley is likely to remain agrarian. But the British imperialist regime has meant that from a typical self-sufficing agrarian country Egypt has been transformed into (largely) a cotton plantation for the benefit of Lancashire cotton capitalists. This, although Egypt is eminently capable of developing economically on European industrial lines : for with the development of hydro-electric technique the potentialities of Egyptian water power become immense. However, it is clearly not to the interest of British imperialism to permit such a technical development to be utilised in Egypt. So the structure of British imperialism is here most plainly acting as a curb on the productive forces of Egyptian society. The fight for economic self-determination at once becomes an integral and vital part of the nationalist and anti-imperialist struggle.

There is no need here to trace in detail the course of the nationalist agitation against the British occupation which has occupied the last forty years. From the days of Colonel Arabi to the outbreak of war in 1914, this agitation changed very little, either in content or in the people engaged in carrying it on. It fluctuated in intensity from year to year and decade to decade with an almost completely moribund period in the early eighteen-nineties. The nationalists

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were large landowners, officials, professional men, lawyers, intellectuals, and so forth—the so-called Pasha class. In 1906, when hopes of help from France in the carrying on of nationalist agitation had disappeared, a party known as the *Khizb-el-Uma*, or People's Party, was organised. It was essentially composed of the elements mentioned above, and was moderate to the pitch of loyalism in character. The more radical Left Wing formed the *Khizb-el-Watani*, or Nationalist Party, which took up the nationalist struggle as a revolutionary struggle against British imperialism, at the same time recognising the important part the masses of workers and peasants were destined to play in this struggle. In fact, as might have been expected, the leadership of the *Khizb-el-Watani* coming from the rising native capitalist class and the professionals, it dared not give the masses a fighting lead when the moment came for action.

With the war came the declaration of the British Protectorate over Egypt—"for the duration." At first the Egyptians were assured that they were only desired to maintain a benevolent neutrality in the struggle of imperialisms: but it was not long before requisitions of farm beasts and food supplies were in full swing, and the young fellaheen were forced to "volunteer" for the Egyptian Labour Corps by the most rigorous martial law brutality. The martial law regime roused the keenest resentment and fury among the Egyptian masses: and in addition their economic position grew steadily more deplorable. The first months of the war were accompanied by an acute fall in prices. The crops were not worth the cost of reaping them, and were left to rot; the distressed fellaheen wandered up and down the country in famine-stricken crowds, and the workers in the towns suffered considerably. After a time prices began to recover, and then swept upward to an unheard-of height. In 1919 prices were in many cases ten times more than they were in 1914: the average wage had only increased three times. When, on the cessation of the war, the British Protectorate and the hated martial law regime continued to exist without the least sign of abolition, the temper of the masses reached boiling point. The objective situation was undeniably revolutionary—but the masses were leaderless and unorganised. Who was the eagerly awaited leader to be?

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It was hardly to be expected that the culturally backward masses would throw up their own leaders. Besides, Egypt had not yet experienced the bourgeois revolution. It was, therefore, not surprising that the man who came forward was a representative of the interests of the progressive capitalist class—an ex-Minister of Education, Zaghlul Pasha. Zaghlul organised the Egyptian deputation to the Peace Conference—the *Wafd-el-Mosri*—and applied to the British military authorities for passports, which were refused : at once the whole nation ranged itself behind Zaghlul, and virtually gave him a mandate to speak in the name of the nation. The subsequent deportation of Zaghlul and his companions led directly to the mass uprising of March, 1919. The workers struck, the civil servants struck, women demonstrated, students demonstrated, the fellaheen cut telegraph wires and tore up railway tracks. Repression, with all its accompaniment of imprisonment, exile, floggings, hangings, did not stop the revolt. The British Government was forced to allow the Wafd to come to London for negotiations : and out of these negotiations one vitally significant fact emerged, namely, that the Wafd, while using the mass revolt as a means of forcing a compromise on the British Government, while adopting the revolutionary slogans of the Nationalist Party to this end also, was essentially and fundamentally opportunist. The Wafd was a centre group, and formed a rallying point for the capitalist Right Wing of the Nationalist Party. Zaghlul himself, it should be noticed, retained his membership of the old People's Party. The initial negotiations of the Wafd with the British Government resulted in an impasse—the Zaghlulists declaring that the British terms meant a continuation of a veiled protectorate, while the more conservative followers of Adly Pasha were prepared to compromise to the fullest possible extent, in order to put an end to the (to them) unpleasantly tense political situation. The Zaghlulists, in thus affecting intransigeance, were but swayed by the determined pressure of mass revolt.

Meanwhile the Milner Mission had visited Egypt, ostensibly to inquire into the causes of the " late disturbances," and had issued its report. One sentence in that report stands out : it is in the place where the Mission go out of their way to say polite things about the " moderate nationalists," who, it is said, are perfectly willing

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to recognise special British interests in Egypt ; why, then, is there any need for a formal protectorate ?—

> Would not an orderly and friendly Egypt, in intimate association with Great Britain, serve British purposes as well, or even better, while removing all sense of grievance and all spirit of revolt on the Egyptian side ?

This admirably expresses the aim of enlightened imperialism : it is the classic policy of " rallying the moderates ; " and the report went on to observe that this aim might best be secured by a treaty between Britain and Egypt, which would secure the protection of (*a*) imperial communications, and (*b*) all " legitimate " foreign interests in Egypt. To get an Egyptian Government which would sign and operate such a treaty became the object of British imperialist policy in Egypt right through the year 1921. Supported by the British power, Adly Pasha formed a Ministry. Zaghlul returned to Egypt, receiving a hero's welcome from the masses of the population, and the political issue that at once arose was—would Zaghlul come to some agreement with Adly, and would the Zaghlulists agree to support Adly's government ? In other words, would there be a consolidation of the thin upper strata of feudal lords and the bureaucracy represented by Adly and the progressive capitalists and professionals represented by Zaghlul ? As it happened, neither the Zaghlulists nor the British power were convinced that the time was ripe for such a step. More, the reactionary elements in British imperialism—Lord Curzon most notably, seconded by Field Marshal Allenby, the real ruler of Egypt—were not at all convinced that their policy of repression, of the maintenance of direct imperial rule over Egypt, was in any sense bankrupt. Popular feeling in Egypt against Adly was growing in intensity, and negotiations in London between Adly and Lord Curzon broke down. Adly resigned, and the formation of a new Ministry proved quite impossible. Zaghlul Pasha was again deported in December, 1921. This new crisis led to the gradual realisation that the policy of repression had failed, and at the end of February, 1922, the formal restoration of Egyptian " independence " was announced. It was a very formal restoration indeed, as the most important questions, such as the Suez Canal and the protection of foreign interests, were absolutely reserved for future discussion between the British Government and the Egyptian

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Parliament, when elected. Practically, British imperialism, by this "Unilateral Declaration," was proclaiming to the world its monopoly-interest in Egypt, was crying "Hands off Egypt!" to the other imperialist Powers in order to tighten its own grip.

A Ministry was formed by Sarwat Pasha, a member of the Adly group. This Ministry dragged out an existence for several months, without being able to achieve anything that either the Egyptian bourgeoisie or the British power wanted. Suddenly, after the acting president of the Wafd had had a mysterious interview with King Fuad, and the Wafd had published a violent manifesto attacking the Government, Sarwat resigned. His resignation was virtually a dismissal, and in his stead Tewfik Nessim Pasha formed a Ministry. Nessim was pro-Zaghlulist, and his Ministry meant an alliance between the Palace—and hence the British power—and the forces of native progressive capitalism organised in the Wafd. At last it seemed that British imperialism had realised the necessity for striking a bargain with the nationalists, of rooting itself more deeply in the organism of Egyptian society than it could by an alliance with the Adly-Sarwat feudal-bureaucratic elements. The struggle between the two classes, the old aristocracy and the new capitalists, as to which should share the exploitation of Egypt with British imperialism, now appeared definitely resolved by the victory of the latter. In future it appeared quite certain that imperialist exploitation would be carried out through the medium of the native bourgeoisie; the basis of British imperialist rule in Egypt had been significantly widened.

As it happened the alliance between the Palace and the Wafd was far from being a permanent one. The British power remained unconvinced of the immediate necessity of striking a bargain with the nationalists in order to make Egypt safe for imperialism. Consequently, from December of last year up to date a peculiarly tortuous series of political intrigues has been taking place in Egypt. The Nessim Ministry was forced by Lord Allenby to resign, early in February, nominally over the Sudan question (which nationalist opinion desires to unite with Egypt), and Adly Pasha once more was discreetly pushed to the front of the political scene by the British power. Meanwhile, the growth of mass unrest was symbolised by the increase of bomb outrages and terroristic

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attentats on British troops and civilians. British martial law, still the only reality of Egyptian government, grew daily more brutal. Whole districts were held to ransom for outrages committed in their areas. Even *The Times* correspondent admitted that Egypt was suffering from:—

> a martial law regime severer than in any previous period, not excepting in some respects the critical days of 1919.

After much hesitation Adly refused to form a Ministry : but there was no gainsaying Lord Allenby, and rumours soon began to spread that Adly was reconsidering his decision. Just at this moment of crisis, the anti-Adly polemic of the Wafd became mysteriously mild. Adly made advances to the Wafd, which were rejected, it is true, but in a manner that was far from precluding the possibility of such a union in the future. While a particularly violent series of outrages in late February and early March was horrifying imperialist opinion, the British power delayed the arrest of the leaders of the Wafd (which had earlier been threatened if the outrages continued), hoping against hope for a *rapprochement* between the Wafd and Adly Pasha. In a most revealing dispatch on March 5, *The Times* correspondent declared (a declaration the significance of which was only heightened by the very disingenuous "recantation" published, obviously under pressure from the British Residency, a few days later) :—

> In view of the apparent bankruptcy of martial law, a solution may be found in a new orientation of policy—possibly in entrusting the maintenance of order and security to the Egyptian Government. If this policy were developed it would seem that the only possible course to take would be to release Zaghlul Pasha, the sole Egyptian strong enough to inspire a Government with sufficient power to maintain order without the British support given under martial law. . . . Zaghlul Pasha, or a Government enjoying Zaghlulist support, would also alone be able to "deliver the goods" the British Government requires—namely, an Indemnity Act, the settlement of the conditions of retirement of British officials, &c.

However, repression remained the order of the day : and a stop-gap "Ministry of Affairs" was formed by Yehia Ibrahim Pasha (previously Minister of Education), to deal with the vast amount of administrative business that had accumulated since Nessim's fall. Both the Adly-ites and the Wafd received the new Ministry with suspicious reserve : and the Wafd severely criticised the

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(doubtless intentional) vagueness of Yehia Pasha's official utterances. Again the persistent rumour spread that Adly was making advances to the Wafd, which was alleged not to be meeting these advances with much enthusiasm. But the fact is now clear, beyond a doubt, that a consolidation of the feudal-bureaucratic elements under Adly with the bourgeoisie of the Wafd is a political possibility of the fairly near future. Adly has declared against the continuance of martial law, and has won thereby the approval (albeit guarded) of the Zaghlulist Press.

Yehia Pasha's Ministry is unlikely to live long : there have already been rumours of a crisis. The enlightened sections of imperialist opinion are calling (as *The Times* dispatch above) for the release of Zaghlul and for a compromise with the Wafd as the only way out of the impasse. The *Manchester Guardian* correctly summed up the whole business by saying :—

> With the release of the nationalist leaders and the resumption of normal law we can probably still get a representative Egyptian Cabinet willing to promulgate the new constitution in a form that will satisfy Egyptian aspirations, while reserving essential British interests.

It is with statements of this kind that the release of Zaghlul on March 30 (officially for reasons of health) must be related. The tide of imperialist opinion has now, it seems, finally turned. And the Wafd are fully aware of this : in a manifesto issued on the release of Zaghlul, expressing their satisfaction with the action of the British Government, they state that :—

> The aspirations of Egypt are not in contradiction with the protection of foreign interests.

This, then, is the end of the opportunist centrism of the Wafd, of the nationalism of the Egyptian bourgeoisie—" independence " plus safeguards for imperialist interests, the very formula of the imperialists themselves !

The fact that emerges from the foregoing analysis of the nationalist movement is clear enough, namely, that a purely nationalist movement can never give real national independence to the Egyptians. When we turn to examine the nationalism of the Left Wing of the *Khizb-el-Watani*, depending on the discontented small traders and shopkeepers, lower grade civil servants, students, &c., substantially the same fact appears. Under the leadership of Dr. Hussein Pasha the Left Wing nationalists pursued

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a revolutionary nationalist propaganda among the town workers and the peasant masses ; but it was typical petty bourgeois revolutionary nationalism—high-sounding revolutionary slogans and phrases, with a shrinking from the actual revolutionary struggle. And further, it was still, though anti-imperialist and to that extent revolutionary, concerned (like the similar Indian movement) with boycotts and non-co-operation—which could be carried to a certain point and then led nowhere. There was no fundamental appreciation of the impossibility of achieving a purely nationalist revolution : no realisation that only a revolution at once social and political, a revolution of the Egyptian labouring masses, led by the organised working class of the towns, could liberate those masses from both their foreign imperialist and their native bourgeois exploiters. Without such a liberation national independence must be either the shallowest trickery or the most hopeless illusion. The masses of the Egyptian people, in their struggle for national independence, are fighting, and will have to fight, both the forces of British imperialism and the combined forces of Egyptian feudalism and bureaucracy and the Zaghlulist bourgeoisie. It is in this respect that the development of an organised Labour Movement in Egypt in the years since the war is of the first importance.

There are 2,000,000 workers (strictly speaking, an urban proletariat) in Egypt, 4,000,000 " unclassified occupations and unemployed "—chiefly agricultural labourers—1,000,000 poor peasants (with holdings of less than half an acre) and half a million only slightly less poor peasants (with holdings averaging just over two acres). These masses of workers and peasants were the driving force of the 1919 revolt. The spirit of mass revolt, lacking conscious direction as it did, forced nationalism into a revolutionary channel. The nationalists on their side, as has already been remarked, simply exploited the mass revolt in the hope of frightening British imperialism into a compromise satisfactory to the aspirations and interests of the Egyptian bourgeoisie. But gradually a working-class movement began to appear as an independent political force. The revolt of 1919, and the strikes of that year and of 1920, produced a great crop of trade unions, mostly small and local. A number of these federated in the General Federation of Labour in 1921, which body was stated to comprise 60,000 members. In

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1921, too, had been formed the Egyptian Socialist Party (actually the Egyptian Communist Party), which itself was responsible for organising certain unions, and has considerable influence in the General Federation of Labour.

That the party is making itself a power in Egyptian politics is witnessed by the recent arrest of its secretary and several leading members while they were taking part in a strike demonstration at Alexandria The police attacked the demonstration as it was leaving the offices of the General Federation of Labour, wounding several workers. The party offices, as also those of the General Federation of Labour, were closed by the police—acting, it is said, under the orders of the British military authorities—after all papers and documents had been removed. This was on March 18, though the news did not leak out in Europe till ten days later. No protests have been heard from the nationalists or from the British Labour Party.

The party is working to unite the forces of the town workers, and through this union to gain for itself a leading position among the masses of agricultural labourers and peasantry. The analogy of the Russian Revolution is evident.

The party has formulated a "popular and concrete" programme for the everyday struggles of the workers and the peasantry. For the town workers the programme includes :—

(a) Labour protection laws.
(b) Factory inspection.
(c) The eight-hour day.
(d) Recognition of trade unions and working-class political organisations.
(e) Equal pay for Egyptian and European workers.
(f) Establishment of industrial committees.
(g) Formation of producers' and consumers' co-operatives.

The agrarian question is, undoubtedly, the most urgent of all the questions confronting the Egyptian working-class movement and the Socialist Party : everything turns upon it. The proposed agrarian programme of the party includes :—

(a) Suppression of farm tenure, by which the landowner secures the larger half of the products of the soil.
(b) Cancellation of debts of peasants owning less than thirty *feddans*.[1]

[1] 1 *feddan* = 1·036 acres

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(c) Total exemption from land taxation for all peasants owning less than ten *feddans*.

(d) State confiscation of all land holdings over 100 *feddans* (including Crown and Shrine lands)—the surplus land to be divided among the landless peasants or used to inaugurate communal farms. (It should be noted that 13,000 landowners own nearly half the cultivated land of Egypt.)

(e) Organisation of committees of poor peasantry and agricultural labourers in the villages to agitate for these demands.

At the same time it must be emphasised that these are all provisional half measures. The full demand of the working class and the poor peasantry is the entire socialisation of the land.

In the matter of immediate political demands the Socialist Party stands uncompromisingly for the revolutionary nationalist struggle, recognising that insofar as the nationalist movement is anti-imperialist it is fulfilling an historically revolutionary rôle—and that also the bourgeois revolution, that the nationalist movement implies, represents an historic advance on the existing social condition of Egypt. The immediate political demands of the party are therefore :—

(a) Union of the Sudan with Egypt.
(b) Nationalisation of the Suez Canal.
(c) Cancellation of the national debt.
(d) Abolition of the capitulations.

The bourgeois character of these demands is not denied : they are put forward (for instance, the nationalisation—that is, the return to Egypt—of the Suez Canal) because of their anti-imperialist nature. It would be a profound misconception of the tasks of an Egyptian fighting working-class party to consider the nationalist struggle as one with which the party had no concern.

What is the attitude of the Labour Party towards the Egyptian nationalist struggle against British imperialism ? Has this, the premier political party of the British working class, realised the true significance of the nationalist movement, and the movement, as yet unorganised and unled, of the Egyptian masses that lies behind it ? A few statements taken at random of representative leaders of the Labour Party will provide the answers to these and similar questions.

In November, 1920, Mr. Arthur Henderson, concluding an

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article on Egypt in the *Daily Herald*, laid the gravest emphasis on the dangers to the British Empire resulting from a policy by which :—

> a key position of imperial commerce and strategy (may be) made, instead of the home of a friendly, co-operating people, a centre of sedition and revolution.

This statement needs no comment. It is frankly and unashamedly imperialist. A year later, in the same paper, Mr. H. N. Brailsford wrote a long article in which he stressed the ease with which " we " (the British imperialists) might come to an agreement with the Zaghlulists. He felt that " we " could not satisfy Egyptian claims to the Sudan, though he admitted that " we " only held it by right of conquest—and the rule there of " our " officials was more enlightened and efficient than the rule of Egyptian officials. But his main contention was contained in the words :—

> The temper of the Egyptians makes it possible for the Imperial Power to do a seemingly generous thing at surprisingly little cost to itself. None of the real interests of British imperialism incur the slightest risk. It is hard to say whether we occupied Egypt chiefly because it is a rich field for investment, or still more because it is the half-way house to India. There would be under an alliance recognising the independence of Egypt ample recognition of both these interests.

This statement also requires no comment. Mr. Brailsford, author of " The War of Steel and Gold," was as imperialist as Mr. Henderson. In January, 1922, the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the Executive of the Labour Party issued a joint manifesto, in the course of which they mournfully deplored that the report of the Milner Mission (to judge from the tone of the manifesto, quite the last word in far-seeing statesmanship, so far as Egypt was concerned) was never adopted by the Government. The Milner report, they said :—

> explicitly recognised the right of the people of Egypt to independence, and proposed measures " in order to establish the independence of Egypt on a secure and lasting basis." It was incumbent upon the Government to take immediate steps to act upon the report of this commission and to establish Egyptian independence through a treaty negotiated between itself and a duly-elected Government of the Egyptian people.

It was a favourite expression on Labour Party platforms at this time—that the policy of the British Government was making a " second Ireland " of Egypt. When British imperialism achieved

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its masterstroke of the Irish Free State, it was followed with blind adulation by the Labour Party. If British imperialism attempts, by a bargain with the Zaghlulists, to make a "second Ireland" of Egypt in this newer—and, perhaps, more sinister—sense, there can be no doubt whatever that the leaders of British labour will come to heel as blindly as before. Mr. Ben Spoor, who was taking his holiday in Cairo this spring, declared, as a result doubtless of his observations on the spot that :—

> No solution of the Egyptian question is possible until militarist control has been replaced by diplomatic control.

Could there be a more concise and perfect expression of the views of enlightened imperialism on the problem of Egypt?

Mr. E. D. Morel, that valiant exposer of the iniquities of imperialist exploitation of backward races, described Zaghlul Pasha quite accurately in an interview with the *Manchester Guardian* as an "Anglophile constitutional agitator," who was *persona grata* with Lords Cromer, Kitchener, and Milner : he went on to say that he was convinced that it would be perfectly easy for "us" to reach agreement with Zaghlul on the "reserved points" (Suez Canal, protection of foreign interests, &c.). He did not approve of giving up the Sudan to Egypt, but thought this a matter that could be amicably settled between "our" Government and a Zaghlulist Government. He concluded with these words :—

> We should adopt towards Egypt the same policy so signally successful in the case of South Africa under the inspiration of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. To keep down Egypt by force would be a costly and difficult, dangerous and, above all, stupid policy.

The Labour Party have crowned their imperialist record in the matter of Egypt by the publication of a letter in *The Times* of March 29 signed by the best part of a hundred Labour M.P.s (including one or two "independent" minded members of other parties). This letter, while praising Lord Milner, and appealing (not in vain, for he was released a couple of days later) for the release of Zaghlul, could actually say that :—

> Among the signatories to this letter are many who had hopes of the success of Lord Allenby's policy in Egypt. There are none who question his sincerity and patience in endeavouring to make it succeed.

After which astounding piece of soft talk over reactionary imperialism at its worst, the letter, with scrupulous courtesy, points

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out the failure of the Allenby policy—and draws the moral on the approved Zaghlulist lines.

The leaders of the Labour Party have, then, no conception of the true significance of the Egyptian nationalist movement. They do not even seem to have heard of the existence of an Egyptian working-class movement. They cannot view the rapidly advancing agreement between the British power and the Wafd as a part of the process of imperialist development. They cannot see that such an agreement, though it is a widening of the basis of imperialist rule, is at the same time an abdication of imperialism, is, in fact, a stage in imperialist decline, which offers a magnificent opportunity for the organisation of the further step in the Egyptian revolution—the revolution of the Egyptian toiling masses. The statesmen of His Majesty's Opposition follow all the time in the track of British imperialism. They do not view the Egyptian question as part of a universal struggle—the class struggle. But then the very outlook of the leaders of the Labour Party is itself a product of the imperialist stage of capitalist development. And those same leaders would be the first to deny that it is a party of the class struggle.

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THE FRANKFORT CONFERENCE

ON Friday, March 17, the International Conference called by the Rhenish-Westphalian shop stewards met to formulate a working-class programme of action in view of the occupation of the Ruhr. The Conference derives its extraordinary importance from the fact that it is the sole attempt that has been made to unite the forces of the workers of Europe against both protagonists in the struggle for the undivided control of Lorraine iron and Ruhr coke.

Although the President of the Conference was a German Social-Democrat, the German Social-Democratic Party refused to take any official part in the Conference. This refusal was typical of similar parties in other countries—for instance, the I.L.P. and the Labour Party. The Communist International at once accepted the invitation to the Conference. Their letter of acceptance expresses clearly their willingness to collaborate with workers of all parties or of no party to plan and push forward united working-class action against imperialism.

We give this letter in full below :—

FROM THE EXECUTIVE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN FRANKFORT-ON-MAIN

WORKER COMRADES—

When the Executive of the Communist International received the invitation (sent to all organisations of the workers by the Rhenish Workers' Councils) to participate in an International Conference at Frankfort-on-Main, they did not hesitate a moment before accepting it. The Communist International places the whole of its influence at the disposal of those sections of the German proletariat which realise the nature of their international task. A special delegation of the Executive of the Communist International will bring to your Conference our messages on all the burning issues which have arisen out of the occupation of the Ruhr.

The Executive believes that it is vitally necessary to explain clearly, definitely, formally, to the entire working class of the whole world that the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals have again failed, that they have once more openly neglected to fulfil what was their most elementary duty.

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All the resolutions recently adopted by the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, at their Peace Congress in the Hague, have become scraps of paper. One of the best-known leaders of the Amsterdam International, Edo Fimmen, recently declared that nobody dreams of carrying out these resolutions. Edo Fimmen tries to make out that the proletariat is responsible for this, saying that the international working class stands on one side divided and helpless.

Exactly the same method was used by various disguised Socialist Chauvinists in 1914 at the beginning of the war. They also tried to avoid responsibility for their wobbling and treacherous conduct, blaming the working class instead of their leaders. The Second and Amsterdam Internationals are helpless because they have no inclination to fulfil their duty. The working classes are helpless and divided because the Second and Amsterdam Internationals divide them and consequently make them impotent. If the leaders of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals were ready to set up a united front with the Communists, and make it a reality, the workers would be in a very different position. We ask the leaders of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals, once more, if they are willing to form a united front with the Communists. We are quite ready to negotiate with Social Democratic and Reformist trade union leaders, although our opinion of these leaders has been repeatedly confirmed in the most glaring way possible.

The principle enemy at the present moment is French Imperialism. The German workers can only be successful in overcoming this enemy after they have suppressed their own, the German, bourgeoisie and in that way have linked themselves closely with the revolutionary working class—with Soviet Russia in the first place, and also with the French proletariat.

The Communist International is ready to do all it can to build up a genuine united front with the workers who belong to the Second and the Amsterdam Internationals. But if certain leaders who dominate the Social Democratic Party machines succeed in wrecking the united front, the Communist International will in any case give a lead to the fighting sections of the German and the French proletariat.

Only the Communist Parties and the Revolutionary Trade Unions have done their duty up till now. Only the German and French Communist Parties, following the lead of the Communist leadership, have worked out a common line of action and begun to act upon it. Only the Communists have fulfilled their international duty in the fight against French Imperialism, and have found their way into the prisons of Poincarê the Brute.

The very fact that at such a critical moment two big Communist Parties, the German and the French, have consulted together is an event of the greatest importance for the workers of the whole world.

International conferences are, for us who are Communists, no mere parades or simple demonstrations. What we are striving to achieve is a real effort to link together the daily fight of the various sections of the international working class. Political life is now internationalised to a very high degree. The very reactionaries are forced to prepare international measures in common; the revolutionary movement of the workers has far more need to do so. The workers must learn not merely to pass resolutions in common, but also to act together, to unify their methods of fighting, and to plan common struggles.

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As a milestone on the path towards the inevitable proletarian revolution, the Conference in Frankfort-on-Main cannot be disregarded. Stubbornly, remorselessly, and with inexhaustible energy the workers of the various countries must aim at creating a real combined fight.

The Executive of the Communist International sends the heartiest fraternal greetings to the much-tried workers of the Ruhr, to the fighting section of the French workers, and to the vanguard of the proletariat throughout the whole world.

Our slogans are yours also:—

Down with French Imperialism!
Down with the German Bourgeoisie!
Up the Revolutionary Labour Movement in France and Germany!

Moscow, *March* 16, 1923. THE EXECUTIVE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL.

In the *Bürgersaal* at Frankfort, guarded night and day against local Fascists by workers' defence groups—"centuries"—Communists sat in conference with members of other working-class parties and working-class militants from no political party. The President's opening remarks gave the note of the Conference—declaring that with the invasion of the Ruhr had sounded the hour for the preparation of international working-class action against world imperialism. An agenda was drawn up, comprising :—

(1) The situation in France.

(2) The situation in Germany.

(3) The occupation of the Ruhr and the danger of war.

Reports were delivered by French, German, and other delegates on the situation in their respective countries. Great enthusiasm was evoked by the reading of the declarations in favour of a united front of the German Social Democratic and Independent Socialist groups at the Conference. Both declarations condemned the anti-working-class stand taken up by those working-class organisations which had refused to participate in the Conference. In particular the declaration of the Majority Socialist (now United Social Democrats) group deserves reproduction, as a significant indication of the desire of workers in an avowedly reformist party to form a revolutionary united front with all other sections of the working class.

DECLARATION OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GROUP

By occupying the Ruhr, the French and Belgian imperialists have committed an act of war full of danger for the German workers as for the

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workers of France and Belgium. The occupation of the Ruhr is an outrage like a whip-blow to the German working class. It is a grave menace to the French and Belgian working classes.

It signifies the danger of a new slaughter of peoples. Even if an agreement is arrived at between Poincarê-Loucheur and Cuno-Stinnes, this would only be to the detriment of the workers on both sides of the Rhine. The exploited masses of the three countries will be the victims equally of war or of peace between French and German capitalists.

The occupation of the Ruhr has given new strength to French and German chauvinism. In both countries Fascism is arming, with national defence as its pretext. In both countries Fascism desires, in order the better to enslave Labour, to provoke a new national war.

Face to face with this situation, the working class must form, both nationally and internationally, a united front of resistance against imperialism, against the danger of war created by the Ruhr occupation, against Fascism. The working class can only expect victory from its own unity.

Accordingly, we demand that the United German Social Democratic Party and the General Federation of German Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), breaking with their policy of coalition and collaboration with the exploiters, enter into the struggle for the Workers' Government in the different States of Germany and in the Reich.

Similarly, the German bourgeoisie is in a large measure responsible for the war and the Ruhr occupation.

For union with the bourgeoisie must be substituted union with the revolutionary working class, by the alliance of the United Social Democracy and the German Communist Party. We can only realise a united front with the workers of France, of Belgium, of England, and other countries by fighting against the German bourgeoisie. In this great struggle we must place ourselves side by side with Soviet Russia, the first and only Workers' State. We demand from the Second and Amsterdam Internationals the support of their organisations in the international class struggle. The international situation is as serious as on the eve of the world war. We will not have a new 1914. We demand from the international organisations of the workers—War Against War!

The Social Democratic group of the Frankfort Conference declares that it will do all in its power to encourage this will to action in the Social Democratic Party and the trade unions. United with the bourgeoisie the working class is damned. Forming a united front, national and international, it is invincible. We will conquer peace and freedom.

Long live the International United Front!

THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GROUP OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

In one of the outstanding speeches of the Conference, Losovsky analysed the Ruhr occupation and the resultant political problems facing the working-class movement, both nationally and internationally. The long resolution of the Conference on the Ruhr

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and the danger of war embodies the salient features of Losovsky's address.

A further resolution, instructing the Committee of Action set up by the Conference to establish by all possible means a united front with the Right-Wing Internationals and their chief constituent parties is appended to the main resolution.

I

THE RUHR OCCUPATION AND THE DANGER OF WAR

The Frankfort International Conference—which has been summoned on the initiative of the Rhenish Westphalian Workers' Councils, and which has been attended by delegates from the most important countries in Europe, and by workers belonging to all political parties: Social Democrats, Independent Socialists, Communists, and Revolutionary Trade Unionists—resolves, in view of the situation created by the occupation of the Ruhr, as follows :—

(1) That the national and international struggle against the occupation of the Ruhr, especially in Germany, France, and Belgium, must be continued and intensified. The slogan is *Evacuation of Occupied Territory.*

(2) That in order to secure the annulment of all international treaties of spoliation, and above all the Treaty of Versailles, the most energetic struggle must be organised and carried on in all countries.

(3) That in pursuit of this struggle a systematic agitation must be carried on in the army in general and more particularly among the troops in occupied territory. The work of enlightening the white and coloured troops is one of the most important tasks of the present and the near future.

(4) That an unceasing propaganda of fraternisation must be carried on among the workers in occupied territory and the occupying troops, both equally wage-slaves whom the bourgeoisie are trying to set at each other. It is necessary to prove to the French, Belgian, and English soldiers that the German workers are in an equal degree the irreconcilable foes of the ruling class in Germany and France.

(5) That the necessary work of reconstructing the devastated areas must be carried out at the expense of the ruling classes in all countries, under the control of workers' organisations, till the reconstruction of the devastation caused by the war gives place to the general socialist work of reconstruction.

(6) That work among the young people, among women, ex-service men, and war invalids must be carried on much more seriously in every country. The Revolutionary Young People's organisations and the Ex-Service Men's International organisations, which have already made a successful beginning to their fight, are bound, just like the revolutionary women, once more to be drawn into the active fight of the entire working class against war, imperialism, and Fascism.

(7) That it is necessary to organise inquiries on the spot in the Ruhr, by representatives of the workers in the shops and in the trade unions of France, Belgium, and England, in order that the workers of these countries may get to know the position of the workers in occupied territory, who are exploited under the double yoke of their own employing class and of foreign imperialism.

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(8) That German-French-Russian fraternal unions must be formed among the workers of the most important industrial groups at least, above all the railwaymen, the miners, and metal workers. It shall be the task of such fraternal unions to plan and carry out actions of solidarity and, further, to help in co-ordinating international action in concert with the Committee of Action.

(9) That control commissions, international as well as national, must be formed among the workers in those industrial groups which are employed in the transport and preparation of munitions (workers in the armament, aeroplane, and chemical factories, miners, seamen, railwaymen, and transport workers). These control commissions must be formed in the first instance on the frontiers, at railway junctions, and at the most important harbours.

(10) That special conferences of representatives of workers' councils and trade unions from Germany, France, Belgium, and occupied territory, especially from Paris, Brussels, and Rhenish Westphalia, as well as Berlin, must be immediately summoned for a discussion of all questions which are connected with the position of the workers in the occupied territories, in order to consider what may be the most practical immediate action.

(11) That from April 15-22 will take place an International Week of Protest against the occupation of the Ruhr territory. The demonstrations of this week must be the occasion for tremendous manifestations against the predatory Treaty of Versailles, against the danger of war, against Fascism. Workers' organisations of all parties, and especially the wide sections of the labouring masses who belong to no party, must be attracted to join in these demonstrations.

(12) That the demonstrations of this week must be supported by an agitation, both inside and outside Parliament and all public bodies, against the Ruhr occupation and the danger of war.

(13) That during this International Week of Protest the fight against any policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie must be taken up everywhere. The creation of a united working-class front and the organisation of an international strike in case of a threat of war can only be the fruit of a continual and unrelenting struggle against the capitalist offensive in all its forms.

(14) The International Conference appoints delegations which it empowers to negotiate with the Amsterdam and Second Internationals, the Vienna Union, as well as with the workers' organisations in the various countries with regard to the preparation and carrying out of this Week of Protest against the Ruhr occupation and the formation of a united working-class front in the fight against Fascism, war peril, and the Versailles Treaty. These delegations shall be made up of representatives of the various political tendencies represented at the Conference.

(15) The Conference elects an International Committee of Action of twenty-one members, from among the delegates of all the political and economic organisations represented at the Conference. If any organisations not at the Conference should, after its conclusion, join in the international united front they also can send their representatives to the International Committee of Action.

(16) As a body that is above party, the International Committee of Action

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is instructed to set up and maintain amicable relations with workers' organisations, whatever their political tendency. When the leaders of the national and international organisations refuse to work with the committee, the latter is empowered to make a direct appeal to the masses, over the heads of their leaders, through the workshops, the works councils, and local organisations.

(17) The International Committee of Action has the task of uniting all the political and economic organisations of Labour in the struggle against international imperialism. For this purpose the International Committee of Action is to negotiate with all workers' organisations for the convening of a Workers' International Conference for the struggle against imperialism, war, and Fascism.

(18) The Conference authorises the International Committee of Action to set up a fighting fund to which all workers are invited to subscribe.

As the occupation of the Ruhr is a result of French-German-English conflict for European hegemony, the workers of those countries have special duties to perform in addition to their general duties.

The struggle must be still further intensified and widened in France, where the Communist Party and the C.G.T.U. have up to now splendidly sustained the fight against the imperialist designs of the French bourgeoisie.

Scrap the Versailles Treaty !

Get out of Germany !

These must be the slogans.

Agitation and propaganda must be followed up by public demonstrations against the rise in prices, against the tax on wages, against colonial exploitation, against the use of the army—and, above all, black troops—in the conflicts of Capital and Labour, and for the taxation of the propertied classes alone, for the emancipation of the colonies, for the abolition of standing armies, for the freedom of State officials to hold what opinions they please, for the arming of the working class.

The tactic of the united front which has already had good results in France must be carried on both by the political party and the revolutionary trade unions. Since in France works councils are only being formed, it is necessary to begin with a campaign for the summoning of congresses of delegates from all workshops, factories, and mines, firstly according to districts, and later on a national scale, to consider the question of the unity of the trade unions and the danger of war.

In Germany the duty of the revolutionary working class involves the struggle on two fronts. The immediate aim is the expulsion of the French imperialists from the Ruhr with the aid of the international action of the workers.

In opposition to 1914, the German working class is to-day the only force which can defeat the external foe and end the conflict in the interest of the working class. They thus stand for the interests of the wide mass of the population, whereas the bourgeoisie, in consequence of their readiness to come to an understanding with the French bourgeoisie for the common exploitation of the workers, is paralysing the defence of the Ruhr.

The workers are gathering and organising the *cadres* of the revolutionary

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struggle against French imperialism, the only struggle by which Entente imperialism can be conquered. In order to defeat the imperialist aims of the French rulers and to create the strongest bond of international solidarity among the workers, what is required is to set going a mass fight for the overthrow of the Cuno Government and the formation of a revolutionary Workers' Government.

While the Social Democratic Party and the reformist Trade Unions subordinate the interests of the workers to those of the bourgeoisie, by supporting the Cuno Government, it must be the task of the revolutionary workers to bring together all the forces of their class, especially those outside the Ruhr district, for the struggle against the Cuno Government. That is only possible when everywhere—in opposition to the endeavour to lower wages and to lengthen the working day, and in opposition to the murder gangs of Fascist nationalists who are maintained by the big industrialists—the united revolutionary working-class fighting front is set up.

The works councils and workers' control commissions must increase their agitation against the rise in prices, for control of production, and for the creation of workers' "centuries" for defence against Fascism.

To the evasion of taxation by the propertied classes, the labouring masses have to oppose the claim for the seizure of values in kind by the Workers' Government. The working class refuses to stand the expense of the sham resistance of the German bourgeoisie to the French bourgeoisie. It is opposed to all policies of capitalist reconstruction.

The revolutionary workers of Germany are more than ever opposed to any new capitalist war. They would far rather hand over to the avidity of French imperialism the wealth accumulated by the German bourgeoisie—in order to gain the breathing-space necessary for building up the power of the working class—instead of sacrificing workers' lives in a capitalist struggle. If these efforts to maintain peace were wrecked by the greed of French imperialism, in spite of the enthusiastic support which a German Workers' Government would not fail to evoke in all countries, and if the forces of Entente imperialism did not give up their attempts to wage war on the German Workers' State, the German and Russian Red armies, allied with the revolutionary workers of the Entente countries, would be able to beat off the forces of imperialism and counter-revolution.

The revolutionary workers of Great Britain have as their task to urge the Labour Party and the trade unions to decisive action against the occupation in Germany, and against the danger of a new war. In the Press, in public meetings, in a ceaseless Parliamentary agitation, a great campaign must be carried on to enlighten the British working class on the situation in the Ruhr, and also on the results of predatory British imperialist policy in Ireland, in the Near and the Far East, especially in Turkey, in Egypt, and in India, and to unite them in opposition to this policy.

Propaganda in the army and the fleet is of the first importance. The wholesale unemployment, the capitalist attack on wages and hours, the taxation of the workers, and the housing question provide the opportunity for a fruitful agitation for the united working-class front.

In Italy, where is still going on the Fascist orgy, which has dragged the

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labouring masses into an actual state of slavery, the more easily to drive them into new wars, the most urgent task is first the unification of all the revolutionary forces of the country, and then the reconstitution of the workers' mass organisations, and the concentration of the forces of the workers in town and country, without distinction of party.

A struggle must be carried on for the freedom of assembly, of the Press, and of association; for the release of political prisoners; for the guarantee to the workers of housing without rent increases: against wage reductions, wage taxation, the rise in prices and the arbitrary dismissal of workers and officials for their opinions; for placing all taxation on the propertied classes; for the guarantee of peasants' labour contracts; for the complete application of the eight-hour day.

Legal and illegal work must be vigorously carried on in the army and in the Fascist organisations. This work of organisation and unification of all the forces of the workers in the struggle for the defence of the vital interests of the labouring masses, relying on the solidarity of the international working class, will provide the necessary forces for the overthrow of the Fascist regime.

In Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Rumania, and Jugo-Slavia the Governments are directly controlled by French imperialism, and through these States French imperialism stretches its fingers out towards the frontiers of Russia and towards German territory. In these countries, when war is threatened, our slogans are: "*Down with the French financiers and their flunkeys! Down with those who are pledged to sell the blood of the workers for French gold!*" In these countries which border upon Soviet Russia it should be specially noted that the workers, if war involved Soviet Russia, would fight on the side of the Workers' Republic. Here our work must be closely connected with that of the revolutionary workers of France and Germany. Agitation and propaganda must be closely bound up with the fight against unemployment, the rise in prices, oppressive taxation, political oppression, &c.

The Russian workers who have shown their international solidarity during the Ruhr crisis by big demonstrations, by collections of money, and by sending corn to the Ruhr, will give a decided support to the French and German workers in their fight against their exploiters. The revolutionary Governments of the future will receive unstinted support from the Russian workers, and will find them ready to enter into a common struggle in order to gain power for the workers and assure their rule. An alliance of the Russian Soviet Power with the victorious Workers' Governments of Western Europe will render the power of the working class invincible.

II

THE REFORMIST INTERNATIONALS AND THE UNITED FRONT

The Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions, the Second International, and the Vienna Union of Socialist Parties have not accepted the invitation of the German Works Councils to take part in the Frankfort Conference, and indeed have not replied to the invitation. Nevertheless, the German Independent Socialist Party has sent a delegation to this Conference and Social Democratic groups have—despite the ban of the official organs of

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their party—sent delegates. English trade unions, affiliated to Amsterdam, have sent fraternal greetings to the Conference. The great masses of the workers desire the united front of the working class in spite of the sabotage of their leaders. Accordingly, the Frankfort International Conference instructs the Committee of Action it has set up to invite the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions, the Second International, and the Vienna Union of Socialist Parties to organise, both nationally and internationally, the United Working-class Front against the occupation of the Ruhr and against Fascism, on the lines of the other resolutions of the Conference. Further, the Committee of Action is instructed to open direct negotiations with the most important sections of the before-mentioned International organisations.

The Conference spent some time in the discussion of Fascism and the organisation of the workers' struggle against it ; and in her address on this subject, Clara Zetkin analysed Fascism as a symptom of social pathology, and pointed out its intimate connection with the whole question of the Ruhr occupation. Fascism, she said, divides the working class and infects it with the poison of nationalism, so that the sole force—the organised working class—capable of conquering at once the Comité des Forges and the German coal magnates, is threatened with destruction. It is not enough to dismiss Fascism as a White Guard movement. Fascism is distinguished from such movements by its demagogic appeals to the working masses, its attempts to organise its own trade unions, and so forth. It endeavours to demoralise the workers' movement from within in order finally to break it with the greater ease. It is at once a superior form of reaction and the incarnation of extremist militant nationalism. It has become, in a sense, a mass movement, rooted in wide strata of the petty bourgeoisie, the small peasantry, and even certain proletarian elements. But it has only become a mass movement because of the decay of capitalist society. This decay (following on the world war) has meant that large numbers of lower middle-class elements, intellectuals, small civil servants and State employees, unemployed ex-officers, &c., have lost the comfortable positions they held (or that their families held) before the war, and have been depressed to a level beneath even that of the working class. Further among the Fascist bands are to be found workers who were deceived by the unredeemable promises made by reformist socialists—promises of a gradual amelioration of conditions within capitalism, of a steady progress "towards Social Democracy." These various elements—political waifs they might

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be called—form the basis of Fascism, which, with its glorification of the State, the neutral State above all classes and parties, its militant nationalism, and its extreme reaction, can only be described as the Bonapartism of the twentieth century. The policy of reprisals by individual workers against individual Fascists is suicidal. The reactionary force of Fascism can only be countered by the weapon of organised mass struggle.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

It is the vital task of the workers to take up the struggle against Fascism, victorious in Italy, and in process of development in other countries. They must overcome Fascism politically; they must organise themselves to repulse Fascist attempts at force. To this end—

(1) Working-class parties and organisations of all political tendencies must set up a special body to direct the fight against Fascism. The duties of this body are:—

(a) Collection of all information about the Fascist Movement in their own country.

(b) Systematic enlightenment of the working class as to the hostility of the Fascist Movement to the working class by means of newspaper articles, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, meetings, &c.

(c) Organisation of the workers' defence by the formation of armed "centuries"; organisation of workers' transport control committees to prevent the transport of Fascist bands and their supplies.

(d) To win for this struggle all workers without regard to their political differences; to summon all Labour parties, trade unions, and all working-class organisations to a common resistance to Fascism.

(e) To carry on a campaign against Fascism in all Parliaments and public bodies.

(f) To devote special attention to the anti-Fascist enlightenment of the youth amongst whom the Fascists recruit most of their militant followers. To invite the organisations of working-class youth to take an active part in this work.

(2) Fascist organisation takes place on an international scale. It is therefore necessary to organise the struggle of the workers against Fascism internationally as well. For this purpose an International Workers' Committee must be set up. The duty of this International Committee must be, besides the collection of information, to organise an international struggle in the first place against Italian Fascism. In this struggle the committee will adopt the following methods:—

(a) An international campaign for spreading information through newspapers, posters, pamphlets, and mass meetings as to the anti-Labour character of the Italian Fascist Government, and as to the systematic destruction of all workers' organisations and institutions by the Fascists.

(b) Organisation of international mass meetings and demonstrations against Fascism, against the representatives of the Italian Fascist State in foreign countries, &c.

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(c) Employment of Parliamentary action; appeals to the Parliaments, especially the Labour groups in them, as well as to the international Labour organisations, to send delegations to Italy for investigating on the spot the position of the workers.

(d) Demands for the immediate release of all imprisoned working-class fighters.

(e) Material and moral support of the persecuted workers of Italy by collections of money, asylum for refugees, support of their work in foreign countries, &c. To this end the action of the Red International Relief must be extended to the victims of the repression, and all workers' organisations invited to collaborate with it.

(f) Investigation of the possibility of a political, material, and moral boycott of the Fascist Government.

The International Committee of Action is instructed to put itself in touch with the Provisional Committee for the fight against Fascism and with the organisation which it has set up in order to establish a permanent committee.

It must be impressed on all workers that the fate of the Italian workers will be their own if they do not prevent by means of an energetic revolutionary fight against the ruling class the giving over of masses of the less class-conscious elements to Fascism. The workers' organisations must consequently apply all their energies in defence of the toiling masses against exploitation, oppression, and usury, *i.e.*, against capitalism, and oppose the sham revolutionary and demagogic watchwords of Fascism with a serious and organised mass struggle. Further, they must resist with all their strength the first attempts to transplant Fascism to their own country.

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The World of Labour

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CANADA

Workers' Party Congress

THE Workers' Party in Canada has made noteworthy progress during the first year of its existence. On the occasion of its second convention, during the last week of February, 1923, the strength of the Party was declared to be 4,808, composed of the Finnish section numbering 2,028, the Ukrainian 880, and the general section with 1,900 members. Since the first convention a year ago the party has succeeded in organising groups in sixteen labour councils, over sixty local railroad bodies, two big metal mining camps; the railroad groups include representatives of thirteen out of the sixteen standard crafts, with three of the Big Four.

The policy of the party and its attitude to the question of the United Front against capitalism were discussed; the difference between European parties and those of U.S.A. and Canada was clearly shown in the resolution on the United Front. It was urged that the first essential was to work in the industrial field for the amalgamation of existing craft unions into a series of massive industrial unions, in which connection approval was expressed of the Trade Union Educational League work, and in the political field the chief work is to consist in being in the forefront of the Labour Party. To this end the Workers' Party decided to join and strengthen the sections of the Labour Party wherever they exist, and to help to create them where they are non-existent.

This co-operation with the Labour Party, the resolution declares, in no way signifies that the Workers' Party will sink its distinctive aims and principles; on the contrary, the maintenance of its independence as an organisation is rather regarded as an essential guarantee for the further progress of the Labour Movement in Canada.

It was therefore decided, in accordance with this policy, to work out a common programme of action to fight the following questions of immediate importance to all workers:—

(1) Unemployment; (2) " open shop "; (3) eight-hour day; (4) free speech; (5) freedom to picket; (6) espionage, both by Government and employers;

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(7) injunctions as a means of intervening in Labour struggles; (8) establishment of complete political and economic relations with Russia; (9) intervention of police and military forces of the State in Labour struggles.

In view of the wretched conditions of the farmers and their dependence on large corporations the Workers' Party decided to co-operate in their struggle against capitalism, pointing out, however, that the farmers cannot hope for success unless they gain the co-operation of the industrial workers in the cities.

It was decided to conduct a campaign against the immigration policy of the Dominion Government which aims at increasing the number of available wage-slaves in a country where unemployment is all too rampant.

FRANCE

Defeat of Moselle Miners

ON April 5 the delegates of the Moselle miners decided to terminate the strike which had begun on February 8 and involved 25,000 men. Negotiations with the employers broke down on February 12, when they refused to consider an increase in the wretched wages of the miners. Time strengthened the hands of the employers, for after a few days' embarrassment coal deliveries from England and America began to arrive and operate against the struggling French miners.

The strike, it must be pointed out, was supported by the Unity Confederation of Labour (C.G.T.U.), and the General Confederation of Labour (C.G.T.) issued instructions to its followers not to support the strike, though it is reported that they did down tools.

The demands of the miners were:—

(1) Restoration of wages to the level before wage reductions took place and, to meet the increased cost of living, a general increase of 1.50 francs for underground workers, and 2.50 francs for surface workers.
(2) Incorporation of the cost of living bonus in the wage.
(3) Establishment of workers' councils to control loading and unloading.
(4) Abolition of the deduction of income tax from wages.
(5) Examination of the pensions system in force in Alsace-Lorraine, and of the special claims of the miners in Alsace-Lorraine.

The Moselle workers' wages were reduced by four francs since 1919, and are twelve to sixteen francs a day, and skilled hewers receive twenty francs. They have now returned to work unconditionally after a brave stand of eight weeks. More than 300 militants were imprisoned, and many were deported because of alleged pro-German tendencies!

GERMANY

Labour Government in Saxony

THE Social Democratic Buck-Lipinski Government in Saxony was forced to resign on January 30. The immediate cause of the fall of the Cabinet was the failure of the Home Secretary, Lipinski, to grapple with the growing Fascist forces. The then Cabinet was dependent on the Communist deputies' support for its majority, and when the Communists put forward a vote of no confidence in the Social Democratic Government,

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which had only been in office since December 1, 1922, the bourgeois parties voted with them because they regarded the Government as too advanced.

On March 21 a new Cabinet was formed, with Dr. Zeigner as Premier. This decision was reached after long deliberations, the more reactionary Social Democrats favoured a coalition with the bourgeois parties; but the Social Democratic Congress in Saxony decided against any such coalition by a three-fourths majority and in favour of approaching the Communist Party. The Communist Party promised support on certain conditions, which were accepted by a delegate conference on March 20; the result is that the new Government is composed of left-wing Socialist elements.

A summary of the Communist demands, which the Zeigner Cabinet has accepted, is as follows:—

> (1) The formation by the United Social Democrats and the Communists of a Workers' Defence Force, under the direction of the police, for the protection of the workers' demonstrations, meetings, and organisations.
>
> (2) The establishment of special workers' commissions to control profiteering in all centres with more than 10,000 inhabitants, and elsewhere if necessary.
>
> (3) A law to be enacted for the establishment of a Chamber of Labour, which should be based on the fact that the Chamber is a body of public justice. Amongst other duties it is to prepare laws and formulate complaints and proposals to be put before the Government and public bodies. The members of the Chamber are to be subject to recall.
>
> (4) Amnesty to be granted by law to those imprisoned for crimes committed through economic want. Further, the Government should continue the present practice of granting amnesties to certain political prisoners (wholesale amnesty on this head is not insisted on so as not to include counter-revolutionaries).

On April 10 Dr. Zeigner announced his programme in the Diet in accordance with the above summary. He further declared that the Government would do everything in its power to substitute communal production for the present system of private enterprise; that it would defend the eight-hour day and support the workers' struggles for better conditions generally. The Premier pointed out that Fascism was organising its forces, and that unless drastic measures were taken to suppress these organisations the Government and the workers would be defenceless, hence the necessity for the formation of the Workers' Defence Force.

The chief Fascist organisation is the Storm Division (Sturmabteilung) of the German National Socialist Labour Party, composed chiefly of ex-officers, students, higher officials, who take an oath to "obey unconditionally" any call to duty issued by the organisation.

The acceptance by the Social Democrats of the Communist conditions is the first actual step in forming a united front, and it is generally expected will lay the foundation of a real Workers' Government in the province of Saxony.

Trade Union Collaboration

For the preservation of the common interests of all workers adhering to the German General Federation of Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), the Federation of Clerical Employees (Afabund), and the General Federation

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of German Civil Servants (A.D.B.) an agreement on the following basis has recently been entered into:—

(1) That the common good is to take precedence of private interests in questions of economic policy. The preservation of the republican form of government, as essential to the social advancement of the German workers, is to be worked for by all means at the disposition of the signees. The A.D.G.B., together with the other two organisations accessory to this agreement, declares for the International Federation of Trade Unions as a means for the advancement of united trade union action of all grades of workers.

(2) The A.D.G.B., Afabund, and A.D.B. undertake, as independent organisations, to work together in all matters appertaining to trade union, social or economic affairs involving the interests of the workers. Each organisation is to maintain its independence in questions which only involve the interests of a section, though discussion should take place with the other organisations prior to action on points that might influence the interests of other sections.

(3) The A.D.G.B. is to be regarded as the central organisation of the workers, the Afabund as that of the employees, and the A.D.B. as the central organisation of the civil servants. Accordingly the affiliated societies to each of the three central organisations should organise the various specific categories. Any departure from these rules must be mutually agreed on. Disputes not settled by agreement should be referred to arbitration.

(4) To further joint work between the A.D.G.B., Afabund, and A.D.B. in instances when common questions arise, delegates in a consultative capacity should attend executive and committee meetings as well as congresses. When necessary congresses and conferences can be jointly arranged from time to time. The rules as to voting and representation should be those of the A.D.G.B.

(5) Local and district organisation should work on the lines recommended in (4) for the central organisations. Groups of the A.D.G.B., Afabund, and A.D.B. in similar industries and trades should form joint committees.

(6) The agreement signed on April 12, 1921, between the Afabund and A.D.G.B. is in no way effected by this new arrangement.

This is generally welcomed as a step towards united action, at least amongst the right-wing trade unionists.

JUGO-SLAVIA

Election Figures

THE results of the recent elections in Jugo-Slavia, which were carried out under a shameful system of terror, are finally available, and show: Radicals 120 seats; Raditsch (the supporters of independence for the Croats) 70 seats; Democrats 50, Bosnian Mussulmans 18, Serbian Peasant Party 9, German Minorities 6, Rumanian Minorities 1, and the Socialists 3 seats (a loss of more than two-thirds).

The terror, aimed at the newly formed Independent Labour Party (*see* LABOUR MONTHLY, April) and the independent trade unions, did not prevent a considerable number of votes being given in various centres to the Communists viz., Belgrade 1,255 against 529 for the Social Democratic candidate, Laiback 866 (Social Democrat 132), Zagreb 1,249 (Social Democrat 286), Krain 5,589, and in the Styrian territories they gained 5,782 votes.

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NORWAY

The Left Wing Movement

THE Communist Party in Norway is still called the Labour Party, and though its twenty-sixth congress at Christiania, February 23-26, decided to change the name of the official organ from "Socialdemocraten" to "Arbeiterbladet," the name of the party remains unchanged. This congress was faced with a difficult position due to divergent views within the party. The Tranmael section favoured accepting the decisions arrived at by the Communist International Congress last November, with certain reservations; whereas the Scheflo, or left-wing section, demanded the whole-hearted acceptance of the decisions of the World Congress.

After much discussion at the congress the Tranmael resolution was passed by a vote of 94 to 92. Subsequently Tranmael put a resolution, which was passed, in accordance with the decisions of the International; thus enabling the congress to decide on the reorganisation of the party so as to permit membership on an individual basis.

It must be recalled that the Norwegian Labour Party is built up on the trade unions which are affiliated *en bloc*, and hitherto there was no provision for individual members, hence non-Communist elements within the party were easily possible.

The congress was attended by 186 delegates, representing about 55,000 members; three delegates were present representing the Communist International.

Trade Union Congress

The reorganisation of the Trade Union movement in Norway has been contemplated for some time, and conferences have dealt with the question at great length. It was expected that a final decision would be made at the recent Trade Union Congress at Christiania, March 4-12; however, the present position is a compromise between the rival suggestions, which were: (1) The formation of local trade union councils from the existing local trade unions and the formation in every locality of groups of unions belonging to the same industry, thus realising the principle of industrial unionism; (2) the dissolution of both existing national and local trade unions and the formation of local trade union councils from the workshop and factory clubs.

The congress decided to adopt the recommendations of the Executive Committee, which involve:—

(1) Substitution of the present national Trade Union Federations by national industrial unions.

(2) Additional powers for local trade union councils, which are to be formed in every district.

(3) The place of work to be the unit of trade union organisation, to be represented usually by an industrial union.

These proposals are to be put into effect not later than June 30, 1924.

The question of international orientation was another important topic of

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discussion. In October, 1922, withdrawal from the International Federation of Trade Unions at Amsterdam was decided on by a vote of 62 to 15 of the Representative Body. The congress, however, came to no definite decision on this issue; it approved withdrawal from the I.F.T.U. and appointed a committee to examine the question of affiliation to the Red International of Labour Unions at Moscow, this proposal received 151 votes to 64, with 7 abstentions. The procedure will entail submission of the committee's decisions to the vote of the members before October 31, 1923; after which the Representative Body will be responsible for the final decision. A considerable section of the congress favoured approaching the new Syndicalist International, a proposal which received the support of the Social Democrats as well as that of the Syndicalists.

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BOOK REVIEW

DUAL UNIONISM AND ITS RESULTS

The Bankruptcy of the American Labour Movement. By Wm. Z. Foster.

ON page 6 of this booklet the writer, Wm. Z. Foster, astonishes us by declaring that the British workers have made wonderful strides towards acquiring a revolutionary point of view. But as the reader continues he will excuse him for this extravagant remark, for he will realise that Mr. Foster is seeing the British Labour Movement through American horn-rimmed spectacles. It is somewhat of a shock to find our unions here quoted with envy as instruments of industrial unionism; to be told that the leaders of the British Labour Party have advocated, to a greater or less extent, class solidarity and class action. And yet Mr. Foster is by no means of the moderate school of Labour; he is one of the leading, if not the leading spirit of the left-wing movement in America.

The explanation of this seeming paradox is to be found in the low level of the American Labour Movement. Industrially it is years behind English and European Labour—politically, it hardly exists. Out of a population of 110,000,000, not more than 3,500,000 are organised in trade unions. That is, the proportion of trade unionists to the general population is 1 to 31 in America, while in Germany it is 1 to 4½ and in England 1 to 7½. But not only are the American unions weak in numbers; both structurally and spiritually they lag behind the industrial movements in most other countries of western civilisation. In spite of the consolidation of the capitalist forces, they have made little progress towards organisation by industry, and, with the notable exception of the United Mine Workers of America, still cling to the old craft union basis. This policy has been fostered by the reactionary leadership of the American Federation of Labour, inspired by its President, Samuel Gompers. Mr. Gompers' policy of keeping the American Federation of Labour weak and functionless has been the source of his own strength. By zealously guarding the privileges of the craft unions, and fighting every attempt to strengthen the power of the national organisation, he has bought the loyalty of the majority of the Labour leaders. It is difficult to believe that among these leaders are to be found known crooks and convicted criminals, and that many officials have become enormously rich through robbing both employers and workers.

Nor have the American workers been better served by their own Press. British Labour, with its one daily, has often envied the American Movement with its scores of Labour papers. But Mr. Foster shows how a Labour Press can be used against the interests of the workers when in corrupt and reactionary hands. For example, during the great steel strike of 1919 (which Mr. Foster has described in his book on the subject), the three Pittsburgh Labour papers helped the employers to defeat the strikers.

But, curiously enough, Mr. Foster does not blame Mr. Gompers, the arch-reactionary, or the corrupt Labour leaders, for the bankruptcy of the American Labour Movement. He points his accusing finger to Daniel de Leon, the rebel, and to the militants of the I.W.W. and other revolutionary movements. To their policy of "dual unionism," he declares, the American

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Labour Movement owes its present collapse. Hampered at every step by the corrupt trade union bureaucracy, it seemed so much easier to these revolutionary idealists to leave the reactionary unions to stew in their own juice, and to start afresh with the disciples of the faith. In 1905 the Industrial Workers of the World was launched by Eugene Debs and Bill Haywood with a blare of trumpets, and swept into its ranks all the left-wing elements of American Labour. To-day, with far fewer members than it had at the beginning, it is a voice crying in the wilderness. This policy of building up separatist organisations drained the existing trade unions of all life and vitality, and left them to the complete control of the tools of the employers. "In stultifying and ruining the trade unions," declares Mr. Foster, "dual unionism condemned to sterility every branch of the entire Labour Movement, industrial, political, and otherwise." Thus, the Socialist Party, which in 1912 had a membership of 118,000, and was for some years the chief vehicle of revolutionary thought in America, is to-day a negligible factor with a membership of less than 10,000. This collapse Mr. Foster attributes to the fact that the party was not based on the every-day struggle of the workers, expressed through their industrial organisation.

The one redeeming feature in this gloomy picture is the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. This union developed out of the work of an organised minority in the old United Garment Workers, and only broke away from the reactionary parent union when they could carry the rank and file with them. This union has just issued its Documentary History, together with the proceedings of its fifth Biennial Convention held in May last year, which is a record of remarkable achievement.

A new era has, however, dawned for the American Labour Movement. With extraordinary rapidity the doctrine of dual unionism has been overthrown and the militants have gone back to the unions to infuse them with new life. This change in tactics was apparently brought about by the strong stand against dual unionism taken by the Third Congress of the Third International and the First Congress of the R.I.L.U. in 1920. This movement "to keep the militants in the organised mass" is centred round the Trade Union Educational League, formed in November, 1920. The object of the league is to establish a left bloc of all the revolutionary and progressive elements in the trade unions, locally and nationally. In order to facilitate organisation by industry, national industrial sections are being organised in all the big industries, with the result that amalgamation schemes are at present "sweeping the country like a prairie fire." At its first national conference held in August last, the League adopted a programme of which the chief aims are the abolition of capitalism, repudiation of the policy of class collaboration, and the adoption of the principle of class struggle, and affiliation of the American Labour Movement to the R.I.L.U. Although it has been at work with this programme only a few months, the league has made great strides, its chief success being the promotion of amalgamation schemes; also it has secured the affiliation of many local unions and central labour councils to the R.I.L.U. The league also publishes a monthly journal, the *Labor Herald*, which Mr. Foster edits. Mr. Foster has managed to get into sixty-two pages an extraordinarily clear and comprehensive survey of the American Labour Movement, though some aspects of it perhaps suffer somewhat through congestion.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Business Methods and Accountancy in Trade Unions. By Joseph Lynch. Labour Publishing Company, 12s. 6d.

Through the Russian Revolution. By Albert Rhys Williams. Labour Publishing Company, 7s. 6d.

Un Livre Noir (*Diplomatie d'avant-guerre d'après les documents des archives russes, novembre*, 1910–*juillet*, 1914). Tome Second. Preface par Réné Marchand. Correspondances d'Islvosky et de Benckendorf, Rapports de Sazonof et de Kokovtsef, &c. Librarie du Travail, 96 Quai de Jemmapes, Paris, 20 fr.

Job Analysis and the Curriculum. By Edward K. Strong and Richard S. Uhrbrook. Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore, $1.50 and $2.50.

Production. By George Belt. Foreword by George Lansbury. The Herald League, 3s. 6d.

Shall Trade Unions be Regulated by Law? Affirmative by Samuel Untermyer. Negative by Morris Hillquit. Hanford Press, New York.

Guild Socialism. A syllabus for class and study circles. National Guilds League, 6d.

Apprenticeship in Modern Industry. By G. W. Thomson. National Guilds League, 3d.

The Real Enemy and other Socialist Essays. By Dan Griffiths. Foreword by J. Ramsay MacDonald. Grant Richards, 2s. 6d.

The Revolutionary Act. By Frederick Engels. Translated by Henry Kuhn. Appendix by Daniel de Leon. New York Labor News Company. (London Agency: L. Cotton), 9d.

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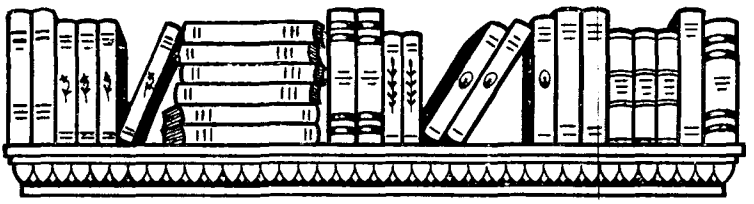

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